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THE

HISTORY

OF

OPHELIA.

PUBLISHED BY

THE AUTHOR OF DAVID SIMPLE.

A NEW EDITION.

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2 vol.

VOL. I.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

I AM obliged to fortune for the papers I now offer to the public. I little imagined, when I bought an old bureau, that I was purchaſing a work of fancy; for ſuch I muſt ſuſpect this little work to be, though it contains many incidents that bear ſo much the appearance of reality, that they might claim ſome ſhare of our belief. I have not been able, by any enquiry, to find out the author, or the Lady to whom it was addreſſed; but I hope I ſhall not give offence to either of them by the publication; for if the ſtory is fictitious, in all probability it muſt have been deſigned for the preſs, as it is unlikely any one ſhould put their invention on ſo laborious a taſk, merely for their own amuſement; and if the ſtory is real, it is pity adventures ſo new and entertaining ſhould be buried in oblivion; eſpecially when they, and the reflections ſcattered throughout the book, are as well colculated for inſtruction as amuſement.

The Author of DAVID SIMPLE.

INTRODUCTION.

YOUR Ladyſhip had little compaſſion either on yourſelf or me, when you deſired me to write you an exact account of every circumſtance of my life, and even of my thoughts, or you did not conſider the long detail into which this lead me; a detail tedious for you to read, and difficult for me to write. You expreſly deſire to know the impreſſions I received from the firſt view of cuſtoms ſo unlike what I had ever ſeen, at a time when they are become ſo familiar to me that I almoſt forget many of them were ever otherwiſe. But your commands can meet with nothing but an implicit obedience from me; and when I mention the difficulties which may occur in the execution, it is not with a deſign of diſputing them, but to excuſe my ill performance of the taſk.

You ſay I muſt firſt account for the ignorance in which I was educated. This is obliging me to trouble your Ladyſhip with more adventures than my own; and is ſcarcely in order, ſince it makes me begin with the relation of circumſtances with which I was not acquainted till a conſiderable time after the hiſtory of myſelf will end.

OPHELIA.

OPHELIA.

CHAP. I.

MY father, whoſe name was Lenox, was the ſon of a Scotch Nobleman; his future fortune depended on his riſe in the army, wherein he was only a Captain, when he married his Colonel's daughter: the Colonel was then in the laſt ſtage of a conſumption, of which he expired in leſs than two months after his daughter's marriage; beſides her, he left another daughter, and they equally ſhared four thouſand pounds, which was his whole fortune. My father died in the third year of his marriage, leaving his wife with child of me: her

grief at the loſs of her huſband was ſo great, her friends feared it would prove fatal both to her and myſelf; but a little before the uſual time, I entered the world alive, contrary to their expectations; but my mother expired before the end of her month.

My father's family were too far off London, the place of my birth, to think of ſo poor an orphan as myſelf; for my mother's fortune was conſiderably impaired, and of her ſide I had no near relation but my aunt, to whoſe care I naturally fell, and her humanity readily undertook the office. My aunt was about twenty-two years old; and was juſt then deſerted by an officer with whom every preliminary of marriage was agreed, when her father's death put a ſtop to it, tho' he had a better fortune than is common to gentlemen of his profeſſion; it then appeared that her charms had leſs influenced her lover than the hopes of obtaining preferment by her father's intereſt, for in a feigned obedience to a pretended command from an uncle, he broke off the match.

As my aunt had conſented to marry in compliance to her father's inclination more than with her own, her indifference afforded her ſufficient conſolation; her lover's behaviour

behaviour filled her with contempt, and independance gave her pleaſure; but this was not long uninterrupted; ſhe had beauty to excite love, and tho' her underſtanding was uncommonly good, it could not render her inſenſible to the charms of a young nobleman, who became enamoured of her. A woman's heart is never in ſo perilous a ſituation, as when vanity joins with a lover's perſuaſions in attacking it. My aunt at laſt grew ſo great a ſlave to her paſſion, that ſhe conſented to a private marriage, which her lover earneſtly entreated as the only means of reconciling his impatient fondneſs with the fear of his father's anger.

Soon after their marriage, her huſband, who was in the army, was ſtationed with his regiment in one of the American iſlands; this gave my aunt rather pleaſure than concern; while ſhe had his company, ſhe could not regret what ſhe left behind; and as he promiſed to own her as his wife when he had got ſo far out of the obſervation of his father, her only uneaſineſs was removed; for notwithſtanding ſhe flattered herſelf that when her marriage ſhould be made public ſhe ſhould recover her blaſted reputation, yet, tho' blinded with love to the utmoſt exceſs of infatuation, ſhe was mortified at

the wounds which preſent ſecrecy made in her character. I was the partner of her voyage, and we arrived ſafe at our deſtined port.

In this place we lived till I was two years old; my aunt happy that the ſole endeavour of her life, which was to pleaſe her huſband, ſucceeded ſo well; for tho' his paſſion was viſibly abated, yet ſtill he was eaſy, good humoured, and affectionate; but one fatal day deprived her of this felicity. After receiving a packet from England, ſhe perceived him thoughtful and uneaſy; fearing ſome misfortune had befallen him, ſhe preſſed to know the occaſion, but the more earneſtly ſhe urged it, the more gloomy he appeared. Two or three days paſſed in this manner, which were moſt afflicting to her, who only lived in his ſmiles. The ſecrecy he obſerved made her apprehend that the news particularly concerned herſelf, and judging of his heart by her own, imagined his great pain was how to impart it to her, and to ſupport her under it; ſenſible that while he was well nothing could make her wretched, her deſire of relieving his uneaſineſs was greater than her fear of any impending evil which her imagination could repreſent; and finding ſome invention was neceſſary, to come at the knowledge

knowledge of what he would not diſcover, ſhe contrived to get at the letters he had laſt received from England, happy in the thoughts of putting an end to his concern, by ſhewing him how well ſhe could ſupport any misfortune while bleſſed with his tender regard.

In this temper of mind ſhe opened the only letter he had not communicated to her; already prepared to acquaint him with the effects of a curioſity, which if ever it can be laudable, was ſo in this caſe; and to ſhew her affection by her courage and compoſure: but what was her ſurprize when ſhe read the following words.

" Do not imagine I am going to re-
" proach the man whoſe perfidiouſneſs I
" muſt ever deſpiſe; that office I leave to
" your own conſcience, which muſt long,
" without my awakening it, have perform-
" ed this duty, tho' its admonitions have
" had no effect on him who can break
" through all ties, divine and human. I
" am above complaining of injuries I can
" avenge, and only write to inform you
" that I will acquaint your father with our
" marriage, and your ſubſequent behaviour,
" unleſs you immediately on the receipt of
" this, declare it to him, and do me the

" juſtice for which I patiently waited, till
" your neglect of me, and attachment to
" the ſtrumpet who now ſhares your bed,
" changed all my love into rage and re-
" ſentment. Think not to intimidate me
" with the effects of your father's anger;
" his pride cannot inflict any thing ſo cruel
" as your faithleſs ingratitude has made
" me ſuffer. My character will be cleared,
" and my injuries revenged, which are the
" wiſhes neareſt the heart of your much
" injured wife.

Your Ladyſhip will eaſily believe that no diſtreſs could exceed what my aunt felt at the peruſal of this fatal letter. It was long before her grief and aſtoniſhment would ſuffer her to go through the whole; frequently was ſhe obliged to leave off, and give vent to paſſions which for ſome time rendered her unable to proceed, when every line ſeemed armed with freſh daggers to pierce her ſoul. My uncle did not come home the whole day, and ſhe employed the time of his abſence, after the firſt burſt of her grief was abated, in obtaining a command over herſelf, and a compoſure of behaviour which might conceal her knowledge of his treachery till ſhe could get into her hands the anſwer to this letter,

ter, from whence ſhe would more certainly judge of the truth of the affair. She was not long obliged to put this cruel force upon herſelf; a ſhip was to ſail for England in two days, and the diſpatches deſigned to go by it were to be ſent the day before. My aunt had laid her plan, and it ſucceeded; but the gratification of her curioſity was to be always painful to her. With far different ſentiments from thoſe with which ſhe opened the former letter, ſhe now broke the ſeal of her huſband's, though yet a ray of hope ſhone upon her afflicted mind, and told her that poſſibly he might not be ſo guilty as the other had painted him; but this ſmall and flattering conſolation was ſoon extinguiſhed by reading the contents, which were as follows.

" Can ſo much cruelty and beauty
" dwell together? and can the una-
" voidable conſequences of an afflicting
" abſence extinguiſh the remains of love
" in that once fond breaſt? my own ruin
" I would ſmile at, if it gave you plea-
" ſure, did not your's depend upon it:
" will you blaſt all my endeavours towards
" raiſing you to a ſplendid fortune, by an
" untimely diſcovery? I ſhall ſoon leave
" this place; ſtay then my angel but till

" my return to England, and I will ac-
" knowledge you as the choice of my heart,
" and my intreaties, united with the force
" of your charms, ſhall make a haughty
" father confeſs you were made to adorn
" the rank which avarice might wiſh to
" refuſe you. That my ſincerity in one
" great point may prove the confidence
" you may venture to have in my word,
" I frankly confeſs I have a woman here,
" but ſhe is only the amuſement of my
" idle moments, while all my ſerious
" hours are ſpent in lamenting your ab-
" ſence, and ſtudying your advancement.
" I cannot defend the inconſtancy of my
" actions, but my heart has never wa-
" vered; let youth, and this forced ſepa-
" ration from you, plead in my favour,
" and incline you to forgive the man who
" henceforward will live only for you, and
" be ever your moſt tenderly affectionate
" huſband.

CHAP. II.

MY aunt, now convinced of her misfortune, and ſpurred on by reſentment, carried the two letters to the Governor, and threw herſelf into his protection. As ſoon as her huſband became acquainted with all that had paſt, he endeavoured to perſuade her that his letter was framed to pacify a deſperate woman, for whom he never had but a childiſh fondneſs, which ended with all his other boyiſh fancies; but that to gain his preſent purpoſe, he was reduced to profeſs to her the ſentiments he only retained for my aunt; he aſſured her, that at his return to England he would have their marriage ratified, and prove the other woman's claim was not legal; of the falſhood of this, his letter was a ſufficient teſtimony. My aunt, though ſhe had at firſt ſuffered the imputation, could not bear the reality of vice; ſhe abſolutely refuſed to return to a houſe where virtue would no longer permit her to inhabit: ſhe demanded her fortune and mine, which had been put into his hands; but only five hundred pounds remained unſpent; that, by the Governor's authority and influence, he was obliged to pay her.

With this little ſum my aunt determined to fly all human kind; deprived of the object of her affections, her peace, and reputation, what charms could the world have for her? She would relinquiſh all at once; and left the country, with no companion but myſelf, in ſearch of a retreat far from the ſight of human kind. We landed in the weſt; my aunt's romantic deſpair led her into *Wales*, where ſhe found a ſmall cottage ſituated on the ſide of a hill, commanding a beautiful, though a wild and mountainous proſpect; at the foot of the hill was a delightful valley, to which, from our cottage, we were led by a fine grove of trees; on the ſide of the grove ran a clear brook, with ſeveral ſmall caſcades intermixed, deſcending into the valley, where it flowed in beautiful meanders, till it loſt itſelf in a little wood. This place was too well ſuited to a love-ſick deſpair not to excite my aunt's envy. She went to it, and found it inhabited by an old man, and two young women, his daughters; ſhe offered him whatever price he would require, if he could be tempted to ſell it. His daughters preferring the human ſpecies to the vegetable creation, had, for above a year, been endeavouring to prevail on the old man to leave a cottage,

which

which was ſituated above twenty miles diſtant from any other houſe; their ſucceſs continued doubtful, when my aunt's offer added weight to their perſuaſions. That one ſound of a little more than the value, will tempt an old man to ſell every remaining bleſſing. Avarice in the uſe of life abſorbs all other paſſions; it is no wonder, therefore, if ſo ſtrong a motive, united with the earneſt endeavours of the two girls, procured my aunt the ſucceſs ſhe wiſhed. The greateſt part of our little pittance was laid out in the purchaſe of this cottage, a garden belonging to it, the adjacent grove, all the paſture land, with the goats it fed, and ſome poultry. My aunt, beſides neceſſaries for herſelf and me, carried ſeveral books, materials for writing, and for various kinds of work. The impatience of the old man's daughters conquered the tediouſneſs of age, and my aunt got into full poſſeſſion of her little purchaſe, without more delay than was neceſſary for her to learn to milk her goats, and the other parts of rural buſineſs ſo new to her. When the former inhabitants left the place, and my aunt ſaw nothing about her but the animals to whom ſhe was to give her care and attendance, and from whom ſhe was to receive the grateful return

of

of ſupport and ſuſtenance, except myſelf, then as ignorant of evil, and almoſt as dumb as they, ſhe began to enjoy greater compoſure of ſpirits; deſpair was ſoftened into melancholy, and air, exerciſe, and all-healing time, by degrees alleviated her ſorrows, and at length raiſed her to content and tranquillity. My aunt's firſt amuſement was the adorning her cottage; it was her laſt, likewiſe, for ſhe was continually ornamenting it during the whole time ſhe ſtayed there; taking pleaſure in beautifying it, though no one was likely to behold either her or her habitation. The care of my education ſoon ſhared her leiſure, and in time became her principal employment. But deſirous not to leſſen my innocence and ſimplicity while ſhe diſpelled my ignorance, ſhe gave me no account of the manners and cuſtoms of a people with whom ſhe hoped I ſhould never have any intercourſe. The books ſhe had brought into Wales were chiefly books of divinity, and ſuch hiſtories as ſerved to enlarge and inſtruct the mind of the reader, without informing him of the exiſtence of vices, which a pure imagination, untaught by obſervation and experience, cannot repreſent to itſelf. My aunt ſo artfully diverſified my employments,

ments, that fond as I was of reading, I had not peruſed all her little library when I left this ſolitude, where I could for ever have contentedly remained. My aunt's tender affection, and reaſonable indulgence, filled my heart and ſatisfied my deſires. We made our nights very ſhort, and yet our days were never too long. The vernal beauties of the finer ſeaſons charmed our eyes, the tuneful choir of birds enchanted our ears, and both united to raiſe our contemplations to their creator; we were grateful for general bleſſings, not leſs eſteemed by us for being common to all mankind; we wanted no partial favours; we ſaw much to admire, much to rejoice in, and nothing to envy.

CHAP. III.

IN this happy tranquillity I lived with my aunt, till one evening that we were juſt returned from walking by our little brook, and admiring the reflection of the moon, then at the full, and which ſhining on the water, a new Heaven in its fair boſom ſhew'd. Before we entered the houſe we were greatly aſtoniſhed to hear a human voice; a ſound ſo ſtrange to us, that

that we could not ſufficiently recover our ſurprize to return an anſwer to the call; nor was our wonder abated at ſeeing ourſelves accoſted by a young gentleman whoſe cloaths outſhone the gentle luſtre of the moon, at leaſt to eyes ſo unaccuſtomed as mine to any but the plaineſt dreſs. At firſt ſurprize had fixed me to the ground, but as I began to recover from the ſudden impreſſion, the firſt effect of my abated fear was to fly from this ſtrange phantom, for ſuch it appeared to me. I was directing my trembling ſteps to the houſe, when the ſtranger, with accents of the greateſt earneſtneſs and diſtreſs, cried out, ſtay! beauteous angel, ſtay! Whether the harmony of his voice, or the ſweetneſs of the flattering appellation was moſt powerful I know not, but my feet ſlackened their pace, and looking round, I ſaw him bending towards me in the moſt ſuppliant poſture, with geſtures which I thought almoſt profane to addreſs to a mortal being. Yet was the humility not diſpleaſing. The moon ſhone full upon him, and was bright enough to ſhew me a face, which, notwithſtanding female vanity, the only innate principle for which I contend, ſeemed to me far more beautiful than my own; a tranſcendancy that before I could not

not conceive, having had no opportunity of comparing myſelf with any thing but my aunt's faded charms, worn with age, and blaſted by misfortunes. Nor was my admiration confined to the ſtranger's countenance; in his perſon appeared that elegant proportion, that delicacy, blended with dignity, of which the mind can judge without rule or compariſon. It is not ſurprizing that, as I had never ſeen any of my own ſpecies but my aunt, and a few times an old man who had been at our houſe on occaſions neceſſary to our rural life, I ſhould be ſtruck with beauty which I have not ſeen equalled ſince I lived in the midſt of mankind, and which had no bad foil in the harſh groteſque features of a Swiſs attendant, who at that time accompanied him. My aunt, with a politeneſs ill agreeing with our rural appearance, addreſſed the ſtranger, who informed us, that "having made a viſit to an acquaintance "on the borders of Wales, the face of the "country had ſo charmed him, by its "wild and natural beauties, that he had "been tempted to ſpend a little time in "viewing more of it; accordingly he left "his friend's houſe two days before, and "travelled where his fancy led him, with-"out having been under any difficulty for

"neceſſary

" neceſſary accommodations till then. " Fine woods and winding rivers had at- " tracted him to ſome diſtance from the " road, and he had purſued the way " thoſe beauties led him, without having " ſeen even an inhabited hut ſince morn- " ing; but had not till then given up the " expectation; when finding that in an " extenſive proſpect his eye could diſcover " no houſe but ours, he was induced to " apply to our hoſpitality for a little re- " freſhment, not imagining that by doing " ſo he ſhould behold charms that not " only ſurpaſſed all the rural beauties which " had captivated his fancy, but the moſt " admirable part of the creation; ſuch as " muſt for ever make him forget that " Wales, or even the world, contained any " other treaſure."

Flattery was ſo new to me, that I did not underſtand myſelf to be the treaſure he meant, though his eyes, which ſpoke nature's language, an univerſal dialect wherein even the ſavage can want no inſtruction, told his admiration in terms more intelligible to ſimple nature's ſcholar; but my aunt's care informed me of the full extent of his expreſſions; no uncommon effect of prudery, which often diſcovers more than the moſt conſummate aſſurance. With a look

a look of indignation; "fye, Sir, ſaid ſhe, "can you expect hoſpitality from us, "when you, with more than ſavage cru- "elty, endeavour to pervert with perni- "cious flattery, a mind hitherto educated "in purity and truth?"

This rebuke, and the ſtranger's de- fence of himſelf, which greatly increaſed the crime laid to his charge, for it was only begging pardon for the ſudden effect made on his ſenſes by the moſt ſtriking beauty he had ever beheld, left me no longer in doubt for the application of his com- pliment: but I could not find in myſelf any ſparks of my aunt's reſentment; her's, however, was pacified by the gentleman's aſſurances of reſtraining his ſentiments within the bounds of ſilence; and after many intreaties, in which I at laſt joined, (ſurprized to find moroſeneſs and want of benevolence in a temper which I before thought all gentleneſs, love, and com- paſſion) ſhe was prevailed upon to admit the ſtranger into our cottage.

If he was ſo ſuſceptible of wonder, or ſurprized at the ſight of a pretty woman, it is not extraordinary that he ſhould be very ſincerely aſtoniſhed at en- tering a little hovel, and finding in it neat rooms, furniſhed with the greateſt ele-

gance,

gance, and ſo much in character that even the embroidery of the chairs, curtains, bed, &c. was in a rural taſte; and every part of the houſe ornamented with things for which we had been indebted purely to nature, and ſo peculiarly diſpoſed as to excel all the efforts of art; nor had the outſide of the houſe, the garden, and the reſt of our little territory been neglected. The ſtranger, to whom, I think, I muſt, to avoid circumlocution, already give his title, and call him Lord Dorcheſter, though I knew it not at that time, was amazed beyond deſcription, on entering the houſe. He began by an exclamation which made my aunt ſmile, and I found ſhe did not think compliments ſo dangerous when applied to herſelf, as when her darling niece was the ſubject of them. But I muſt do her the juſtice to own, that the more places I have ſeen which the art of man has been exhauſted to adorn, the more I am convinced that on this ſubject no expreſſions could exceed what her ingenuity juſtly deſerved. Sallads, milk, and eggs, were all our houſe afforded; theſe we ſet before our gueſt with a cleanlineſs and ſimplicity, the novelty of which delighted him; and with truth he declared that the whiteneſs of our wooden bowls and platters,

ſcarcely

ſcarcely excelled by the linen they were upon, were in his opinion far preferable to ſilver or china. The ſame compliment he made to the freſhneſs and ſweetneſs of our fare, of which, though he might well be ſuppoſed hungry, we could not for a long time get him to taſte, his attention was ſo entirely engroſſed by all the wonders (as he expreſſed it) around him. He aſked us ſome queſtions concerning our way of life; I was ſo ſtruck with the novelty of the adventure, and ſo abaſhed with the preſence of a ſtranger, and his continual gazing at me, that I was quite dumb; but my aunt freely anſwered him; and as our actions were too innocent to require concealment, he received full ſatisfaction. He made my aunt ſome compliments on her good ſenſe and reaſon; declared the admiration her way of life had excited in him; and added with a ſmile, that if ſhe would excuſe him, he muſt juſt obſerve that ſhe had abated his aſtoniſhment at finding ſuch a heavenly form in that place, ſince he now underſtood her neice to be no more than one might expect; for, from angelic food, an angelic life, angelic innocence, and the wiſe and virtuous inſtructions of a parent of more than human underſtanding and conduct, how could

could leſs excellence be expected. He found that the uniting my aunt in his compliment would not excuſe it; ſhe knit her brow, and awed him with ſilence on that ſubject; but his eyes became ſo much more eloquent for the reſtraint laid on his tongue, that my confuſion was inexpreſſible.

His curioſity was ſo happily tempered with politeneſs, that though he at laſt enquired how a perſon, whoſe qualifications ſhewed her to have been bred where every improvement of taſte and underſtanding was to be acquired, firſt came fixed in ſuch a ſolitude, ſo little impertinence appeared in the requeſt, that my aunt, though ſhe concealed the circumſtances, gave him ſuch a general account as ſerved at leaſt to quiet his curioſity. The greateſt part of the night was ſpent in converſation; but at length my aunt, in compaſſion for the fatigue her gueſt had undergone, offered him our bed, the only one our cottage contained; but he inſiſted on our keeping it, and aſſuring us he could ſufficiently repoſe himſelf on a couch that ſtood in the room where we then were, we left him to his reſt.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

AFTER a ſhort ſleep, riſing to our morning's employments, we found Lord Dorcheſter up before us, and employed in examining our library.

My Aunt expreſſed her concern at not having had ſufficient conveniencies to afford his Lordſhip the neceſſary refreſhment the night required; he aſſured her, "that was not the reaſon of her finding "him waking, but that his ſpirits were "ſo agitated with ſurprize and pleaſure, "ariſing from ſo extraordinary an adven-"ture, as he eſteemed the finding two "perſons whom his imagination conti-"nually repreſented as the divinities pre-"ſiding over that charming country, that "he had not been able to compoſe himſelf "to reſt:" adding that, "at the dawn "of day, he aroſe to admire new won-"ders, which he muſt call ſo valuable a "collection of books, whoſe merit made "up for the ſmallneſs of their number, "but more ſtill the extracts from, and "the obſervations upon them, which he "imagined were done by me, from ſome "little corrections in another fine hand "which ſeemed to have been the model

of

" of that wherein thoſe tranſcripts and " obſervations were written." The confuſion this gave me ſeverely puniſhed my negligence in not having removed my miſerable performances into another room. He ſoon made us underſtand by ſome polite compliments, that he had examined into all the papers, among which were many ſhort eſſays on ſubjects my aunt had given me as exerciſes for my underſtanding, and ſeveral things of that ſort which had ſerved as a profitable employment, or as an amuſement for our leiſure hours.

His Lordſhip deſired we would permit him to accompany us in the buſineſs which called for our attendance at that time. He went with us to our goats, our poultry, and through all our domeſtick cares. We then ſhewed him our garden, grove, &c. The elegance and order with which they were diſpoſed, charmed him as much as the ingenuity that adorned them. The ſeats, the bowers, the ruſtick ornaments on the outſide of the houſe, excited his admiration. At our return, he begged leave to ſtay with us till the next day, that he might have time " to come a " little to his ſenſes, for that he could

" ſcarcely

" ſcarcely believe all he had ſeen was " any thing but enchantment."

My aunt had preſerved ſo much of her reſentment againſt the ſex, and was ſo greatly alarmed at every hour I ſpent with one ſo amiable, that he could obtain no other permiſſion than what he might gather from her ſilence. He put his own conſtruction upon it, and then acted accordingly. My baſhfulneſs wearing off by degrees, during the courſe of that day, I got courage to join in the converſation, and muſt confeſs I never thought the gift of ſpeech, peculiarly beſtowed on man, ſo great a bleſſing. My aunt, notwithſtanding all her prejudices, I could ſee was pleaſed with our gueſt; his juſtneſs of thought, his elegance of expreſſion, and the livelineſs of his imagination, afforded us the higheſt entertainment. I have ſince been told, that my aunt would not ſuffer him to ſtay, but on condition that he ſhould ſay nothing which might tend to leſſen my ignorant ſimplicity, having taken an opportunity upon my leaving the room of acquainting him with her reaſons for bringing me up in a happy ignorance of evil, which ſhe hoped would never be diſpelled. He then repreſented to her the

the impoſſibility of my "continuing my "whole life in that ſolitude, unleſs, con-"trary to the courſe of nature, I ſhould "die before her; urged the cruelty of "ſecluding me from the pleaſures I might "enjoy, and from the univerſal adora-"tion to which my perſon," he was pleaſed to ſay, "intitled me, and to "ſtrengthen his arguments, offered my "aunt any aſſiſtance of fortune, if "want of it had been her inducement "for flying from mankind." She replied, "that was a generoſity for which ſuch "ſimplicity as mine might thank him, "but a perſon as well acquainted with the "world as herſelf, would doubt what "gratitude it deſerved, but muſt refuſe "it without heſitation." Of this con-verſation I could not then have the leaſt ſuſpicion, and ſo well did he obey the inſtructions he had received, that I got no knowledge, though much amuſement, by his ſtay with us. At night he again took up with his couch; and if the de-jection which appeared in his countenance the next day might be believed, he had not enjoyed more reſt on it than the night before; but finding it improper to intrude himſelf any longer upon us, about noon he took his leave, which he often

often attempted before he could execute; and at laſt he could not do it without the greateſt appearance of force on his inclinations. At parting, he laid aſide his fear of my aunt's anger, and took ſo tender a farewel of me, mixing ſuch very high flattery with his affectionate expreſſions, as then rendered me incapable of returning any anſwer, and now prevents my repeating them. While he regretted being obliged to bid me eternally adieu, a few tears ſtole down his face, and melted me ſo much that I was almoſt ready to accompany them with ſome of mine. He looked back till diſtance deprived us of each other's ſight. I grew penſive; and I remember my aunt ſeemed diſturbed at it. She endeavoured to amuſe my thoughts, but they were entirely engroſſed by the ſtranger: whatever ſubject ſhe began, the converſation was immediately turned to him. I own my former amuſements became leſs pleaſing to me; I found leſs attention to what I read, leſs joy in the vernal beauties which before delighted me, and innocently told my aunt the change I felt; who with a melancholy, though a gentle forgiving air, ſaid, "ſhe perceived "her company was not ſo ſufficient to "my happineſs as mine was to her's."

This kind reproach had the deſigned effect; it firſt rendered me ſilent on the ſubject, and making me think myſelf ungrateful in not returning an equal affection, I took my heart ſo ſeverely to taſk, that I conquered, or thought I had conquered, this ſudden attachment, and was reſtored to my tranquillity, enjoying all the charms of our ſolitude, in leſs than two months after Lord Dorcheſter's departure. This victory was uſeleſs, for my deſtiny had decreed that I ſhould not abide there much longer.

CHAP. V.

ON the evening of a very hot day, I accompanied my aunt to a ſeat we had placed under the ſpreading ſhade of a venerable oak. The freſhneſs of the air made us unwilling to leave it, and with no other light than what the twinkling ſtars afforded us, we ſat ſinging of hymns, inſpired by true gratitude for the bleſſings we enjoyed, when ſuddenly we were ſurprized with the ſound of the trampling of horſes; my aunt immediately ſhrieked out, caught my hand, and we were running with our utmoſt

utmoſt ſpeed to our cottage, when I felt ſome one ſeize me, but it was too dark to diſtinguiſh the face of the perſon. My poor aunt kept faſt hold on me; begged, entreated, and uſed every argument to prevail on him to let me go; we both kneeled to him, ſhe beſeeching his compaſſion, I joining in the ſuppliant poſture; but more frighted with the terror in which I ſaw her, than with any danger I could apprehend, I had not power to ſpeak; and was greatly ſurprized to hear her addreſs him as our late gueſt, reproaching him with cruelty, ingratitude, and the greateſt breach of hoſpitality, in thus returning the reception we had given him. I could not imagine how ſhe could ſuſpect him of an action that deſerved ſuch imputations; I thought it impoſſible he ſhould be guilty of any bad thing, or that he who ſeemed to have conceived a greater affection for me than I could account for in ſo ſhort a time, ſhould wiſh to do me ſo irreparable an injury as ſeparating me from my beloved and tender aunt, which I now found was the intention of the perſon who held me. She has ſince ſaid that ſhe perceived Lord Dorcheſter's paſſion for me to be ſo violent, that from the time of his departure ſhe had been apprehenſive of ſome ill effects from

it, and had never got a dread off her ſpirits; this made her immediately attribute the preſent attempt to him. But how could I, ignorant of the force of an unruly paſſion, ſuſpect it? My aunt's reſiſtance and mine no longer availed than till another perſon came up, who forced her to let me go, and, notwithſtanding the exclamations of fear and diſtreſs which we both uttered, one of them took me in his arms, and ſetting me before him on horſeback, rode away as faſt as the intricacy of the way would permit him.

At firſt my terror rendered me almoſt ſenſeleſs; I was frighted without knowing what I feared. I had indeed read of murders, but then ambition had been the inducement: what had I to tempt any one to rob me of my life? ſuch wickedneſs could not be perpetrated without temptation or reſentment. My life had injured no one, nor could my death be of any benefit to them; therefore I could not apprehend being murdered; but my ignorance of the nature of the dangers which threatened me gave no eaſe to my mind. A pannic is ſtronger than a reaſonable fear, and ſuch mine was. After a time, grief ſucceeded to terror, and then I found ſome relief from tears. The misfortune of being

ing ſeparated from my beloved aunt, of loſing the pleaſures of her ſweet indulgence and tender affection, was more than my heart had fortitude to ſupport; and how was my affliction embittered, when I reflected on what ſhe would ſuffer, deprived of her only companion, the object of her love and care; and anxious for the fate of all that was dear to her on earth! I wept her ſorrow, I wept my own unhappy fate, in an exceſs ſo ſuitable to the occaſion, that when day-light diſpelled a little of the terrors of my ſituation, I was ſcarcely able to receive any advantage from it, being almoſt blinded with my tears. And it was more from the ſound of a voice once ſo pleaſing to me, than from any diſtinction my eyes could make, that I perceived I was acceſted by Lord Dorcheſter, who addreſſed me with every expreſſion of kindneſs and humility. The harſh notes of a croaking raven could not have been ſo grating to my ears as the voice I before thought ſo harmonious.

I could not but greatly have reſented the injury done me, had it been by a perfect ſtranger; but my anger was much encreaſed when I found the injurer was one who had worn the maſk of a peculiar regard. Hypocriſy was a crime of which I had

never heard; this was my firſt acquaintance with deceit; and hatred ſprung up with it.

I was angry with myſelf for having ever conceived a favourable impreſſion of ſuch a wretch; and although this was, I believe, the firſt paſſion I had ever been in, it had none of the weakneſs of a new emotion. A perſon bred up in the continual exerciſe of her rage could not have expreſſed herſelf more ſtrongly than I did to his Lordſhip, who endeavoured to ſoothe and pacify me; and he ſo far ſucceeded, that I loſt all utterance from the violence of my tears: he ſeemed to feel my ſorrow, and wept with me. I then hoped compaſſion had melted him, and ſeized the favourable moment (as I thought it) to prevail on him to reſtore me to my afflicted aunt: it appeared to me impoſſible that an heart where pity had ever dwelt could refuſe my requeſt; the ardent deſire of obtaining it, the exceſs of my ſorrow and deſpair, made me eloquent; I beſeeched, as a favour, what without the higheſt cruelty and injuſtice could not be denied me, and all the reſentment of an injured perſon was loſt in the humility of the afflicted ſuppliant.

I painted

I painted my wretchedneſs in ſuch ſtrong colours, that I at laſt became dumb with horror at the melancholy proſpect; but yet ſo little did it avail, that I could not obtain one flattering hope of being carried back. I could perceive he was extremely agitated, which made me continue my intreaties as long as I was able; but when I ſtopped, I learnt the little ſucceſs they had, by his crying out, "oh! my "faireſt, my lovely Ophelia! ceaſe to diſ-"treſs the fondeſt heart that ever was "contained in a human breaſt, by aſking "what it muſt refuſe you: with what "joy could I comply with any requeſt "that did not deprive me of you! aſk my "fortune, my life, any thing but your-"ſelf, and it ſhall be your's. Could I have "ſupported life without you, I would "have forborn this violence. Your hap-"pineſs ſhall be all my care, believe me "my deareſt angel; though your pre-"ſence is more neceſſary to my exiſtence "than the light of the ſun, yet would "I reſtore you to your aunt, was I not "ſure that in a little time you would "confeſs yourſelf happier with me than "in the dull ſolitude from whence I have "brought you, to introduce you into a

" variety of lively and enchanting plea-
" ſures."

" I know not your pleaſures, nor your
" cuſtoms," anſwered I; " in my little
" cottage were all my deſires gratified;
" and can I think that man wiſhes me
" happy who tears me from every joy
" on earth. My dear aunt's tender
" goodneſs and faithful friendſhip is a
" bleſſing nothing can equal. You
" would perſuade me that you have ſome
" affection for me; are the greateſt inju-
" ries proofs of love? does your affection
" lead you to afflict the object of it?
" when you reſtore me to my cottage, I
" will believe I am not hateful to you;
" this is the only way you can convince
" me. If my heart was capable of feel-
" ing hatred, I could not wiſh to torment
" the object of it; nay, even you, whom
" I deteſt, I would ſooner defend from
" pain than inflict it, had I the power
" over you which you have unjuſtly aſ-
" ſumed over me: can you be ſo differ-
" ent then, as to wiſh me miſerable, who
" never offended you? who would not
" if I could."

My tears would not ſuffer me to pro-
ceed, nor could Lord Dorcheſter's kindeſt
aſſurances and moſt ardent vows afford
me

me the leaſt conſolation. After travelling half the day in this uneaſy manner, we came to a beaten road, where there ſtood a ſmall hut, as I thought, with two horſes faſtened to it; into this they put me. I had obſerved that the outſide was fine and gay; very different from the little hovels I had ſeen: the inſide likewiſe was neat and pretty, but ſeemed better calculated for beauty than convenience; for there was but juſt room for us to ſit. I did not envy the owner his gaudy habitation, which I imagined muſt be very uncomfortable to live in; when to my great amazement I felt it move very ſwiftly. My fright would have proved very dangerous to me, had not Lord Dorcheſter's care prevented the effects of it; for the exceſs of my ſurprize and fear made me attempt to get out at the window, but his lordſhip held me faſt, till he reaſoned me into compoſure on that account, explaining the ſtructure and deſign of ſuch vehicles, as well as their ſafety. Though my body had ſuffered too much from the agitation of my mind to feel eaſe from any thing at that time, yet I ſoon after grew perfectly well reconciled to this moſt agreeable invention of the luxurious: I did

not immediately proceed far in it; for at night my Lord found me ſo much diſordered, that he declared he would remain at the cottage, where, for want of better accommodation, we were obliged to ſtop, till I ſhould be more able to proſecute my journey.

CHAP. VI.

THE day after our arrival at the cottage, inſtead of being refreſhed, I appeared in a high fever, which in a few days increaſed to ſo great a degree, as made me expect from the quiet hand of Death a releaſe from all my troubles. I was too unhappy to be afflicted at this expectation. Grief for what I had loſt, and fear for what might enſue, fortified my mind. Can the wretched behold the grave with terror? that eternal ſleep from which no worldly troubles can awaken them? that ſecure aſylum from the injuries of man, and the frailty of their own nature? In this pleaſing light, I then beheld it. Lord Dorcheſter was differently affected. He ſeemed to ſuffer from anxiety more than I did from ſickneſs.

He

He was ſcarcely out of my chamber, and attended me with a watchful care, a tender attention, which appeared far above the honeſt good natured humanity of the poor cottager's wife. If I was worſe than common, it was more viſible in his countenance than in mine. One would have thought his exiſtence depended on my life. The leaſt amendment in me raiſed him from a deſpair, which again returned when the favourable ſymptoms vaniſhed. Conſcious that the ſeat of my diſtemper was in my mind, he endeavoured to calm my ſpirits, by promiſing that "if after a year's "ſtay in England I ſtill preferred my "little ſolitude, he would reſtore me to "the aunt whoſe loſs I lamented." I thought myſelf ſo certain of a ſpeedy releaſe from a world with which my firſt affliction had diſguſted me, as is common in the petulant impatience of youth yet unbroken by the reverſes of fortune, that I believed this conſolation came too late; and relieved from my fears by my expectation of an approaching end, I grew more eaſy, and had leiſure to attend to the apparent ſigns of Lord Dorcheſter's tender anxiety. Tho' I could not comprehend how a ſtrong affection ſhould grow in ſo ſhort a time, nor how ſuch cruel effects could

could be produced by love, yet I began to feel ſome compaſſion for his affliction; I ſaw him ſuffer ſo much, that I almoſt forgot he had been the occaſion of my diſtreſs. Even my reſentment was weakened by ſickneſs. My moſt turbulent paſſions ſeemed buried in the grave before me. His ſorrow, his paſſionate lamentations, his tender agonies and bitter remorſe, melted a heart ſoftened by the general decay of nature; and believing my own pains near their end, I pitied his, which appeared then more acute, and likely to be more laſting. Every look, every word and action expreſſed his love in ſuch legible characters, that I ſometimes was ready to believe his profeſſions, though I thought his affection muſt be of a ſtrange contradictory nature. But if all his care and tenderneſs only proceeded from a return to humanity, of which his firſt action declared him at that time void, I could not help owning to myſelf I never before ſaw that virtue appear ſo very amiable. A fortnight paſſed before my fever began to abate, and it left me ſo very weak and low, that I thought myſelf nearеſt death when I really was out of all danger of dying. Above a month more was ſpent in reſtoring me to ſufficient health and ſpirits to proceed on my journey by gentle

gentle ſtages. The natural ſtrength of my ſpirits and nerves, which had then never felt any of the diſorders that, in a degree, afflict almoſt every conſtitution in this country, and by which even mine has ſuffered ſince, returning, I bid adieu to my native ſimplicity of life. Theſe natural ſpirits, with the turn of thoughts my ſickneſs had given, as I have already mentioned, which had rendered me liable to receive tender impreſſions from his Lordſhip's affectionate attentions, together with his promiſe of ſuffering me to return to my cottage in a ſtated time, (for I could not doubt but I ſhould chuſe to do ſo) greatly abated my affliction, and I became capable of converſing with tolerable eaſe, though my heart was ſtill oppreſſed with ſorrow.

The evening of the day we left the cottage was come, before we ſaw any houſe of more noble ſtructure than that which had laſt harboured us. The firſt we drove by, appeared to me a moſt ſtupendous building, though I have ſince learnt it was but a moderate ſized houſe; and before night we ſtopped at what I thought a ſumptuous palace. The hoſpitality of the inhabitants charmed me; they received us

at

at their door, and pleaſure ſat on their countenances; all their words expreſſed a deſire of accommodating us agreeably; I could even have found fault with the impetuoſity of their good will, had not the motive to which I attributed it excuſed, I might almoſt ſay endeared, the inconveniencies it occaſioned. The ſize and colour of the maſter and miſtreſs of the houſe made me tremble for the ſlenderneſs of my waiſt, and fairneſs of my ſkin, in a country which ſeemed ſo great an enemy to the ſhape and complexion; but before the end of my journey my vanity was pacified, by obſerving that this extraordinary bulk, and redneſs of face, was almoſt peculiar to perſons in their way of life.

I admired no part of our hoſt's obliging behaviour more than their leaving us as ſoon as we were ſeated. I felt myſelf too fatigued to make all the returns my gratitude ſuggeſted, and I imagined they left me to ſeek ſome repoſe from ſilence. Supper was ſoon after brought in, and the maſter of the houſe followed, inquiring if we were ſerved as we choſe. I got up and brought him a chair, making room for him to ſit down, and was ſhocked to ſee Lord Dorcheſter endeavouring to hide a ſmile,

ſmile, but giving the old gentleman no encouragement to make uſe of the ſeat I had placed for him; who, with a humility which hurt me, inſiſted on waiting behind my chair. This made me extremely uneaſy, and I was aſtoniſhed that his Lordſhip would ſuffer it.

When our hoſt and ſupper were both withdrawn, I could not forbear expreſſing my approbation of his indefatigable hoſpitality, in ſacrificing the eaſe and quiet of his life to the convenience of others, for I found we were not the only gueſts; and touched a little on the outward civility I thought due to him, whoſe kind reception entitled him to our eſteem and gratitude. I began to find my apprehenſions a little relieved by ſeeing there was ſo much benevolence to be found in a people among whom I had been ſo forcibly introduced. Lord Dorcheſter ſoon put an end to this pleaſing imagination, by telling me "the reception I admired was the "effect of their covetouſneſs, not their "generoſity; and that their hoſpitality "was a mere trade, by which they gained "a ſubſiſtence; and practiſed by none in "this country from other motives." I at firſt exclaimed againſt the general brutality;

tality; but recollecting that my firſt, and hitherto only misfortune in life, had been brought upon me by our not acting with the ſame churliſhneſs, I told my Lord "I was leſs ſurprized, ſince I heard this, "that he had not learnt how to make a "proper return to a virtue ſo unknown to "him as hoſpitality, and which I ſuppoſed "had been baniſhed the kingdom, from "ſome ſuch ill conſequences ariſing from "it as I had experienced."

Fatigue, and the relief my ſpirits began to feel from the diſſipation of my mind by all the novelty which ſurrounded me, made me inclinable to reſt pretty early. Lord Dorcheſter, ſtudious to oblige me, and endeavouring to prevent my uttering a wiſh by his great readineſs to comply with it before I had time to expreſs it but by my eyes, took leave of me, ſaying, that "though he could converſe with and "look on me for ever, yet he had rather "put a force on his inclinations than lay "any reſtraint on mine." And after aſking my permiſſion, kiſſed my hand with more pleaſure than I imagined it could beſtow. Becauſe he was pleaſed, I was aſhamed; I know no other reaſon for my bluſhes, for it before appeared to me too

inſig-

inſignificant to raiſe any. He then bid me a good night, and left me to take ſome reſt, as I ſhall your Ladyſhip, bidding you adieu for a little time.

CHAP. VII.

THOUGH the relation of a journey is often more tedious than the journey itſelf, yet I will ſuppoſe your Ladyſhip's mental fatigue to have been of no longer duration than my bodily wearineſs, and that after a ſhort reſt you are ready to proceed with me on my journey. My aunt had accuſtomed me to great ſimplicity of dreſs; I ſuppoſe foreſeeing the inconvenience ſhe ſhould find in ſupplying us with that train of variety uſed by people who live in the world. I had never worn any thing round my waiſt but thin waiſtcoats, nor any cap in the day time; my hair was extremely long, and curled naturally, for I knew no art, and fell in ringlets about my neck, reaching behind below the middle of my waiſt, and in ſome places

places incroaching on my forehead enough to ſet off my complexion by the contraſt, without hiding the ſhape of it. This peculiarity of dreſs, your Ladyſhip may eaſily imagine, fixed the obſervation of all who ſaw me. I ſoon became ſenſible of the occaſion of the exceſſive gazing ſo very painful to me, though accompanied by expreſſions of admiration even to exclamations of aſtoniſhment; ſo fond are people of novelty, to which, no doubt, I owed the greateſt part of the compliments paid me. I begged Lord Dorcheſter to procure me a proper head dreſs, with which he unwillingly complied; ſo that before the end of my journey I made a decent and common appearance.

Though I was amuſed by the novelty of the objects which paſſed before me in ſo quick a ſucceſſion, and by Lord Dorcheſter's lively and entertaining converſation, yet I was not ſorry when he told me that our journey was at an end; and that the houſe to which we drove, through a long and very wide avenue of venerable oaks, was his own, and the place where our travelling was to ceaſe. The magnificence of the building firſt ſtruck my eye; but when I entered it, the elegance of the furniture

furniture pleaſed me ſtill more. The carving and the pictures charmed me; the country repreſented in theſe, appeared more enchanting than nature itſelf, as the painter's imagination aſſembles beauties in reality never found together. My raptures were not ſilent, my admiration broke forth into exclamations. I ran from one room to another, deſirous of ſeeing more, though not weary of what I had ſeen. Lord Dorcheſter with difficulty prevailed with me to go with him into the garden before the ſun ceaſed to gild the proſpect. I was unwilling to leave a houſe which preſented ſuch various beauties to my eyes, but I could not regret it when he led me to a terras, beneath which runs a rapid river of a conſiderable breadth. On one ſide it commands a very extenſive and beautiful proſpect, on the other is the river, the banks beyond which are very high, and covered with a hanging wood, ornamented with ſome fine buildings, moſt judiciouſly placed.

From the end of this terras we entered into a wood cut into various walks, all terminated with fine views or ſome agreeable objects, and many of them opening in different parts, to let in either proſpects

of

of the country, or views of the river, which runs through part of the wood with great rapidity, falling down a rock of a conſiderable height at the end of one of the walks. A little beyond this caſcade, it is hid from ſight for ſome diſtance, and when it again appears, its form is much altered, for it is deep, and yet ſo clear that one plainly diſcovers every pebble at the bottom, its ſurface as ſmooth as glaſs. In this wood, likewiſe, are many buildings moſt advantageouſly placed.

The garden is divided from the park only by a *ha ha*, unaccuſtomed to which deception, I thought there was no ſeparation, till on the brink of it. The eagerneſs of an inraptured fancy, charmed with all the beauties around me, made me long to paſs theſe boundaries, but the evening was ſo far advanced I was obliged to defer this gratification till the next day, and only to admire at a diſtance the mixture of fine lawns and venerable groves, verdant vallies and wooded hills. The extent of it is conſiderable, and the variety of grounds gives it an air of wildneſs, which greatly charms in the midſt of a country ſo diligently cultivated,

tivated that one expects to ſee there more of the beauties of art than of nature.

When night obliged me to return to the houſe, Lord Dorcheſter conducted me to an apartment deſigned for me. The bedchamber was elegantly furniſhed; but the dreſſing-room moſt ſurprized me; it contained ſo many things that were new to me, that I could ſcarcely gueſs their uſe. The ornaments and the toilette engaged my affections for ſome time, though had I been more accuſtomed to ſuch things, I ſhould have been ſtill more ſenſible of the richneſs and elegance of them. Every thing in the room had its ſhare of my admiration, but after the momentary wonder was paſſed, all theſe nice efforts of the arts of the ingenious fell far ſhort of my eſtimation of the beauties I beheld from the windows, under which were parterres of the fineſt flowers, mixed with the moſt fragrant ſhrubs, and beyond them the river, the wood, and the park. When every thing elſe had paſſed my examination, Lord Dorcheſter opened ſome drawers, and ſhewed me that they were filled with linen, clothes and trinkets, ſuch as are

cuſtomary in this country. Having never had a notion of any thing in dreſs beyond neatneſs and cleanlineſs in the homelieſt garb, I could not help being ſtruck at the reſplendency of all the ornaments I beheld. The fineneſs of the linen I thought curious, but the laces aſtoniſhed me; they appeared to me of a delicacy beyond human workmanſhip. Had I been at liberty to have indulged my vanity, I ſhould that moment have tried the effect of things which I imagined muſt prove ſo ornamental. But my Lord's preſence awed me, and being told ſupper was on table, I was obliged to accompany him to another room, where we ſpent the remainder of the evening till the hour of repoſe parted us.

CHAP. VIII.

I THAT night experienced what people who live in grandeur often find, that pomp will not give tranquillity, which alone diſpenſes quiet reſt. The agitation of my mind allowed me very little ſleep. I had too much matter for reflection from Lord Dorcheſter's reſpectful and affectionate behaviour, which I could by no means think my due, from my enforced ſeparation from my aunt, and my former habitation, dragged into a new world, wholly ignorant of the reaſons of my being ſo, or the conſequences of it, and from the pleaſure I had conceived at the ſight of every thing now offered to my enjoyment; which my Lord even aſſured me was my property, affirming all I beheld was my own; a gift I could not ſuppoſe real, as the little I ſaw of the Engliſh in my journey gave me no reaſon to believe them ſo generous and diſintereſted as to make ſuch preſents. In reflecting on theſe ſubjects I paſſed my night, and had ſome moments of pleaſure mixed with my grief, but they bore little proportion with each other; my ſorrow ſeemed deeply rooted, though it's violence

violence was abated, while the contrary ſenſation appeared only a ſudden flutter, which played round my head but came not near my heart, and would not admit of reflection: however I found it ſo comfortable a reſource, that I endeavoured to encourage it, and, prompted by curioſity, at break of day I aroſe to examine more minutely the things which had ſo charmed me the night before. If I believed any one was ever formed without vanity, I might be fearful of expoſing myſelf by confeſſing mine; but I may hope to meet with indulgence from one of my own ſex, who will candidly imagine herſelf in my place: by her my youth may be received as ſome excuſe; and if I am convicted of having had more than a common ſhare, may I not alſo claim ſome title to unuſual ſincerity in giving room for the accuſation, and hope that virtue may obtain a pardon for my frailty? I ſearched every drawer, and after admiring the things they contained, felt a deſire to try the effect of this profuſion of ornaments. The night-gowns and common undreſſes were grown familiar to me during my long journey, therefore I laid them aſide as not exciting my curioſity, and ſelected the

the moſt reſplendent part of my apparel and trinkets.

For my firſt trial, I choſe a white luteſtring gown and petticoat, flounced with pink and ſilver gauze, each flounce edged with a pink and ſilver fringe. I wove flowers and jewels in with my hair, letting the ringlets fall down my back, which I had lately confined under a cap. I put a ſmall garland of the flowers and jewels round my head, and a larger acroſs my waiſt and neck, paſſing it over my ſhoulder on one ſide, and fixing it to the bottom of my waiſt on the other. I omitted nothing which I thought could adorn my face and perſon, and put on every ornament that I could contrive to place becomingly. Finding my gown too long without a hoop, I put on the ſmalleſt, as a neceſſary diſtortion, not as a pretty part of dreſs; but immediately threw away the ſtiff ſtays, which ſeemed to me invented in perverſe oppoſition to nature, and one of the proofs with which I thought this country abounded, that man in his folly had declared open war with her, and by pretending to improve, had ſo ſpoiled her works, that ſcarcely any traces of the divine artificer remained.

Thus equipped, the employment of ſome hours, I was ſo engaged in admiring my ſweet perſon in the looking-glaſs, doing honour to every beauty I could diſcover, and making myſelf full amends for the trouble I had taken, by the ſatisfaction with which I beheld the effects of it, that I did not perceive Lord Dorcheſter, who paſſed by my window; and ſeeing me, your ladyſhip will eaſily imagine, was tempted to take a nearer view of ſo diverting a figure. He came into my room without my perceiving him: when he entered the chamber he was beginning to excuſe his coming in ſo abruptly; but on my turning round, ſurprized to hear his voice, and aſhamed at being thus caught in the ridiculous indulgence of my vanity, he was ſtruck ſilent, perhaps more from wonder at my folly, than, as he pretended, "from admiration at ſeeing me ſo "much ſurpaſs myſelf, thus attired; "having before, he ſaid, thought me be-"yond the poſſibility of improvement." I was ſenſible of the flattery couched in this ſpeech; for with all my partiality to myſelf, I could not believe I had beauty to ſurprize, though I fancied I had enough to pleaſe. He laviſhed every expreſſion that could ſhew me how much he was delighted with

with my perſon. My complexion, my eyes, my hair, every feature received new praiſes; my air and ſhape were not paſſed over in ſilence. He kiſſed my hands a thouſand times, and would not part with them out of his. Surely no eyes ever expreſſed ſuch a mixture of tenderneſs and admiration; every look increaſed my confuſion: his behaviour put me more out of countenance than the reflection of having been found ſo fooliſhly employed.

I believe it was near two hours before I could prevail on Lord Dorcheſter to ceaſe his flattery, or to take his eyes off me; till at laſt I was reduced to tell him that I ſhould be glad to be left to undreſs, for that I was very hungry, and wanted my breakfaſt, but could not appear before his ſervants thus apparelled.

He ſtarted at my ſaying this, and cried out, "how happy are you, Ophelia, in "that inſenſibility of heart, which ſuffers "you to think of ſuch trifles! but how "miſerable does it make me!" I, who thought breakfaſt a ſerious conſideration, was ſurprized to find him ſo hurt at my mentioning it; and told him, that I could not comprehend how it ſhould either excite envy or diſtreſs: but as he begged I

would not undreſs till after breakfaſt, on which conſideration he would himſelf bring it into my dreſſing room, to humour my deſire of not being ſeen; I complied, glad to reconcile a difference of inclination to which ſo ſerious an air had been given.

My Lord immediately kept his word; but during the whole time his thoughts and eyes were ſo fixed on me that he did not well know what he did. He ſcalded his fingers, ſpilt his tea, let fall his bread and butter, and in ſhort made ſuch a confuſion, that I could not forbear laughing, though I endeavoured to avoid it to the utmoſt of my power: he at firſt bluſhed and ſighed, but at laſt joined with me, and complimented me, in ridiculing himſelf.

It was almoſt dinner time before I could prevail on my Lord to leave me to put on cloaths more proper for common wear, which at laſt he did, I dare ſay not a little pleaſed at finding that what he muſt have deſigned for captivating a childiſh fancy, and corrupting by glaring follies a mind bred in ſimplicity and reaſon, had ſucceeded ſo well.

The remainder of this day and the next were ſpent in ſeeing Lord Dorcheſter's park; the extent of it, and the variety it contained

contained, made it a full employ for that time.

Two days more paſſed in ſeeing ſome neighbouring places, which were fine enough to merit attention, though by no means equal in beauty or magnificence to my lord's. In this time I had ſome opportunities of obſerving inſtances of his humanity and goodnature, which contributed more towards abating my fears, than his continual endeavours to amuſe me to obtain my pardon and merit my affection.

I could not believe that he had torn me from calm happineſs for the chance of making me happier, as he pretended; what he had done was a myſtery hitherto to me inexplicable; but I hoped the man who could be humane and kind to others, would not be cruel to one who had the greateſt tye on his generoſity, that of being within his power, unfriended and defenceleſs: encouraged by this hope I became able to converſe with eaſe, and ceaſed reproaches, which might exaſperate, but I had, by melancholy experience, found were unavailing.

CHAP. IX.

THE ſecond ſunday after our arrival at this houſe, Lord Dorcheſter propoſed my accompanying him to church, to which I readily conſented. Though I had been taught to look on all ſpace as the temple of the great Creator, yet my aunt had informed me that in populous places there were edifices erected for public worſhip. When the ſervice was ended, we walked over it; the building is pretty, but then appeared to me too much calculated to pleaſe the eye, and to fix the thoughts on the arts of men's hands, to be a proper place for divine worſhip; where the ſuppliant ſoul ſhould be intirely filled with adoration of the Supreme Being to which it is dedicated. The little fabrics the church contained, by the beauty of the marble, and of the carving, pleaſed me greatly, as objects, but not as ornaments for ſuch a place, till my Lord told me their ſolemn purpoſe, informing me that they were erected to the memory of his anceſtors.

This made me more particularly obſerve them, and I was ſoon deeply engaged in reading the characters which I found engraven

graven on them; this peruſal filled me with admiration; ſuch exalted virtue as by theſe teſtimonies I underſtood had deſcended through ſeveral generations, was a pleaſing ſubject for contemplation. The little time I had been in the inhabited part of this kingdom had taught me that ſuch merit was not univerſal. My heart was filled with a reſpect approaching to adoration, at thinking I trod on ground ſanctified by being the repoſitory of the ſacred remains of ſuch god-like men. I could not forbear addreſſing their departed ſouls with a zeal and reverence little ſhort of worſhip, and praying for the influence of their great examples towards enabling me to imitate their virtues.

Lord Dorcheſter cruelly broke in upon ſo pleaſing a rapture, telling me that I gave too eaſy faith to the words of man; "though theſe are my anceſtors," ſaid he, "I muſt confeſs few of them had any of "the qualities here aſcribed to them. I "might have ſuffered you, my dear Ophe-"lia, to have continued in your miſtake, "as it would perhaps have given you "more favourable thoughts of the de-"ſcendant from ſuch worthies, had I "not found myſelf envious of the great "ſhare of your eſteem, which by theſe

" falſe characters they had gained. Envy " makes me tell you, that epitaphs are " formed on ideal characters: the writer " collects together all the virtues, graces, " and accompliſhments, that are ſcattered " among mankind; and when theſe are " all blended together with all the ele- " gance he is maſter of, he applies them " to any one who, at his death, wants that " memorial of his goodneſs which his " life has not teſtified. To him whoſe " actions have raiſed no character, a " tomb is erected to bear on it that " which an epitaph can give him. Re- " ſemblance is never thought of; if the " deceaſed has not one of the qualities " deſcribed, it ſerves the purpoſe juſt as " well."

I was indeed inclined to ſuſpect my Lord of envy; I could ſcarcely believe what he ſaid; but when he convinced me of the truth of this account, I ſincerely reſented the pollution of theſe innocent aſhes, in being made ſubjects of ſuch falſhoods; and pitied the pure marble, for having its fair outſide defiled by ſuch foul lies. But what made this practice appear ſtill more ridiculous to me, was Lord Dorcheſter's adding, that this was now ſo commonly known, that no one gave

gave the leaſt faith to theſe monumental inſcriptions; that it ſhould have loſt its uſe, and yet be continued, increaſed my wonder. My Lord likewiſe told me that many people left directions concerning their monuments. It is not ſtrange if this appeared ridiculous to me then, ſince uſe has not yet taught me to ſee it in any other light, nor made me ceaſe to wonder that it ſhould ſhare the dying thoughts of people, who, I ſhould imagine, muſt all have ſomething to leave behind more worthy their care; and ſomething to expect more deſerving their attention, than their own miſerable carcaſes.

I was not without ſelf-love, but had no notion that it could extend to the duſt into which we were to moulder, and make us deſirous to fix our claim to every particular particle.

Though I had not, till Lord Dorcheſter broke in upon my ſolitude, ever received a grain of flattery, yet mere nature and conſtitution had given me a little vanity, without the benefit of compariſon; unable to ſoothe my fancy with excelling multitudes, ſince I had never beheld them, yet in a degree I was vain: nature alone ſuffices to make us ſo; but this kind of poſthumous vanity was far above my

ſimple conception; and I complimented myſelf on my humility, in being only reaſonably fond of a living form of delicate and curious compoſition, abſolutely indifferent to any poor remains, after delicacy of complexion, ſymmetry of features, and elegant proportion of body ſhall be confounded together in one little heap of duſt.

Lord Dorcheſter, to ſave his anceſtors from my partial cenſure, led me into the church yard, where he ſhewed me that the folly was univerſal, and that the poor were as tenacious of the little ſpot to which, after death, they are conſigned, as thoſe who aſſert their title to it by nobler ſtructures. I confeſs I was ſhocked at this diſtinction of ranks, and to find that here the rich and the poor do *not* lie down together; this cuſtom ſeemed to me to deſtroy the equality of the grave, which ends greater contentions than thoſe of precedency.

Upon reading the epitaphs of the meaner ſort, I found their vanity was often confined within the narrow bounds of having lived and died: they were little more than certificates of their former exiſtence, proud to aſſert their having been of the human ſpecies, for many of their woden monuments,

ments, more periſhable than themſelves, bear no other inſcription than the date of their birth and death.

Though I was greatly diſguſted with theſe proofs of the folly of mankind, yet at this time the living were more diſagreeable to me than the dead. I liked better to be an obſerver, than the ſubject of obſervation. Though in my dreſs I had conformed to the cuſtoms of the place to the utmoſt of my power, yet there certainly was a ſtrangeneſs in my look or air that drew all eyes upon me, and which for many years did not wear off, while I remained in the country: I attributed it to the curioſity natural to people who ſee few ſtrangers; but after I left it, I found that by living in a more populous place I only had more eyes upon me. Curious obſervation fettering the freedom of action, I lived under conſtant and painful reſtraint. My Lord endeavoured to make me eaſy by flattery, attributing it to reaſons which might pleaſe my vanity; but though I did due honour to my perſon, yet I could not give him credit; and though I might now the more excuſably believe it, that I have ſeen the obſervation leſſen as my complexion has decayed; and that fewer eyes have

have been upon me ſince the luſtre of mine have been abated by age; yet am I convinced that the only ſuperiority I had over many who while I was preſent paſſed unregarded, was in the air of a ſtranger to every faſhion which I ſtrove to follow; this gave the charm of novelty to a face and perſon which could boaſt no other excellence above a thouſand others which were leſs obſerved.

I would not have your ladyſhip imagine that I am aiming to be thought humble; I am very ready to allow myſelf all the beauty I am conſcious I poſſeſſed; but faſhion or chance often exalts us above our real charms. If truth did not oblige me to make this confeſſion, I ſhould not venture to ſay it, for fear of being believed; for our ſex are as vain of having been, as of being handſome; and though they, while young, live in juſt terror of the words, *ſhe was*, yet when that fatal period comes, their vanity retires into it as into a fortreſs; and ſecure in this ſtrong hold, from which nothing can expel it, it makes little excurſions, and ſupports itſelf with the booty it obtains. One of our own ſex has told us, with full as much truth as poetry, that,

'Women

" Women kind's peculiar joys,
" From paſt, or preſent beauties riſe."

How often does a woman's partial report emulate in falſhood the lying epitaphs which ſhocked my innocent ſimplicity! After the ſmall pox, which frequently is the grave of beauty, how many women have I heard boaſt the charms they never poſſeſſed; and ſoften the mortification of ſeams and ſcars, by praiſing the former clearneſs and ſmoothneſs of their complexions.

But this ſubject has led me from the order which ſhould be kept in a narration; I have wandered from the time to which I had brought my ſtory, and muſt correct my irregularity by returning to it.

CHAP. X.

LORD Dorcheſter's deſire of giving me every pleaſure in his power, led him to make me a preſent of a ſum of money. I would have excuſed myſelf from the acceptance of it, as it appeared to

to me entirely uſeleſs: every thing I could want was provided for me; I wiſhed therefore to refuſe an unneceſſary burthen; but he inſiſted, and I was obliged to acquieſce.

As I had learnt that money was a very neceſſary thing to thoſe who were not ſo amply ſupplied with all it could purchaſe as I was, I thought it a pity it ſhould be ſo ill employed, and determined to diſtribute the ſum, to me ſo uſeleſs, among perſons who were in real want of it. Accordingly, one morning, when buſineſs had called my Lord a few miles from home, I walked out, in ſearch of people who might be made happier by thoſe riches which were to me entirely uſeleſs. I entered the firſt cottage I ſaw, and bluntly aſked the inhabitants if they wanted money? They anſwered in the affirmative, with an eagerneſs which perſuaded me they were in extreme indigence. I now began to feel the value of the treaſure before deſpiſed, ſince it could give ſuch true heart-felt joy as I received, from being able to relieve wretches, of whoſe former diſtreſs I judged by their preſent extacies. When I gave ſome guineas to the mother, ſhe appeared quite frantic with delight; though my raptures were ſilent,

ſilent, yet I could not but think my ſenſations were as ſtrong. I, for ſome time, indulged myſelf in the contemplation of her joy, but as my ignorance of the cuſtoms of this country, ſo new to me, made me curious, I at laſt put a force on my delighted imaginations, and enquired into the uſe ſhe would make of the money I had given her.

Nothing but a full knowledge of my ignorant ſimplicity, can give your ladyſhip a notion of my ſurprize, when I received for anſwer, "That ſhe would buy "herſelf and children handſome cloaths, "keep as good a houſe at the next wake "as any woman in the pariſh, and never "again work for a neighbouring farmer's "wife, who was of meaner birth than her-"ſelf." I was ſhocked to find that I had been contributing to the increaſe of vanity and lazineſs, which muſt have been great before, or the good woman could not have been ſo much overjoyed at obtaining the power of gratifying it. I had no way to ſilence the reproaches of my conſcience but by falſe reaſonings, arguing that when ſuch unreaſonable deſires are too deeply rooted to be conquered, they deſerve our compaſſion; and that the money was better

ter employed in relieving wants, though they were but imaginary, than in being locked up in my bureau.

A great proof of my ignorance of mankind was my endeavour to reaſon this woman out of her vanity; reaſon is too precious a bleſſing to be in the gift of mortals; I could inſtil none into her mind, and was at laſt forced to give up my attempt, finding my arguments had much leſs influence on her, than the deſire of exciting the admiration of her neighbours. The diſappointment I met with in this inſtance did not diſcourage me from continuing my courſe: ſuch vanity of mind appeared to me a monſter in nature; I could not believe the world afforded ſuch another; therefore fearleſs of meeting the like ill ſucceſs again, I entered the next poor cottage. I found the man to whom it belonged ſitting in the chimney corner, with all the marks of ſickneſs and decay in his countenance; his wife induſtriouſly employed, and ſeven children, the eldeſt helping her, the younger part playing about him. I looked ſome time with pleaſure on this little family, for children were ſtill a kind of wonder to me, who had never ſeen any till I was torn from my ſolitude; our own

own infancy, by the gradual increaſe of years, making little impreſſion on us: I then put the ſame queſtion to theſe cottagers as to the laſt I viſited, but with leſs impetuoſity was anſwered by the ſich man, that "indeed they were very poor, and "muſt have ſtarved, had not his wife "been one of the beſt women in the world. "For he had been by ſickneſs diſabled "from working above two months, without money to purchaſe a cure." "Purchaſe a cure!" I replied, with ſome ſurprize, "is there any one who is poſſeſſed "of the power of curing diſeaſes would "require to be paid for it?"

"Alas!" ſaid the man, "nothing is to "be had without money; our doctor muſt "have his fee or we can have no cure." An accuſation of ſuch inhumanity made me exclaim with tears in my eyes againſt this ſecond monſter, which I thought I had diſcovered. I aſked the man, "why, in "ſuch neceſſity, he had not applied to "Lord Dorcheſter?" His anſwer was, "that my Lord's ſteward was his enemy, "and therefore he had no hopes of receiving relief from him, as he was "aſhamed to ſpeak to my Lord himſelf." I obſerved to him that "every one muſt "be well received by my Lord, who gave

"him

" him an opportunity of exerciſing his
" bounty and humanity; that it could
" not be in the power of any of his de-
" pendents to prevent him from conferring
" favours on the deſerving, and relieving
" the diſtreſſed: but that had an appli-
" cation to his ſteward been neceſſary,
" whatever offence he might have taken,
" his anger muſt have vaniſhed at the
" ſight of ſo much wretchedneſs."

The man ſhook his head, and ſaid,
" Ah! Madam, you are very, very young,
" and I am afraid too good for this world;
" God grant you may not ſoon have rea-
" ſon to change your opinion of it."

I did not then underſtand the force of theſe words. I have ſince learned, that they muſt have proceeded from ſurprize at my ignorant belief in the virtue of mankind. When I had given money to theſe people, I enquired into the uſe they would make of it, of which they gave me ſo rational an account that I doubled the ſum with the greateſt delight imaginable; happy in the amends this made me for the diſappointment I found in the unworthineſs of the laſt perſon to whom I had given ſome part of my burden.

This ſucceſs encouraged me to continue my round.

The

The next cottage I went into pleaſed me by its neatneſs. I ſaw only one inhabitant in it; ſhe was a very pretty girl, extremely clean, tho' as coarſely dreſſed as poſſible; ſhe was buſy in her dairy, and nothing about her wore ſuch ſigns of poverty, as in the other houſes I had been in; however, deſirous to ſee whether the love of money was univerſal, I aſked her whether ſhe wanted any.

The girl, in anſwer, ſaid ſhe could not properly be ſaid to want, ſince her father and ſhe, by induſtry and hard labour, were ſupplied with the neceſſaries of life, but that ſhe confeſſed ſhe wiſhed for money, perhaps as much as the moſt neceſſitous.

This appeared to me a ſymptom of a depraved appetite, but I enquired her reaſon. To which ſhe replied, that, "All queſtions were not to be anſwered." My curioſity was perhaps more prevalent than my compaſſion, when I told her "that if "I thought the motive of her wiſhes a "good one I might gratify them."

"If you will buy the ſecret I am ſure "you deſerve it," replied the girl; and then very honeſtly informed me, tho' not without bluſhes, "that a young man in "the neighbourhood had loved her from a child.

" a child, and been equally beloved by
" her; that they were to have been mar-
" ried by the conſent of both their parents,
" when, a few days before the appointed
" time, his father died, and left debts
" behind him to the value of twenty
" pounds; an immenſe ſum to a poor
" labourer. On this account her father
" withdrew his conſent till ſuch time as
" the whole ſhould be paid. This was
" ſuch a ſpur to her lover's induſtry, that
" he worked far beyond his ſtrength, in
" order to raiſe the money; and yet it
" was ſo much to ſave, out of a labourer's
" ſmall profits, that notwithſtanding his
" endeavours it muſt be ſome years before
" the debt can be paid off. She con-
" cluded by telling me that had ſhe mo-
" ney ſhe would ſhorten the time of her
" ſeparation; during which his affection
" for her might cool, and the more rea-
" ſonably as he might look on the immo-
" derate fatigue which oppreſſed his
" mind, and overcame his health, as the
" conſequences of his love for her; and
" it was grievous to her to have that
" appear in his eyes as the ſource of any
" evils."

A few

A few gentle tears trickled down the poor girl's cheeks, while ſhe imparted her apprehenſion, which moved my compaſſion, as well as my reaſon, to a deſire of relieving her. I inſtantly gave her the ſum ſhe wanted, and was overpaid by the delicacy and vivacity of her gratitude, from which I might not immediately have been freed, had not her lover paſſed by the window, bending under a heavy load of corn: this ſight attracted her with all the ſpeed her legs could uſe, and, winged with love, ſhe was with him before I had moved three ſteps from the ſpot where ſhe had left me. I ſtayed a little to ſee the various emotions expreſſed in their countenances; ſhe more delighted to tell, than he could be to hear; as the fatigues he had undergone had more afflicted her than him, to whom they were ſweetened by the reward promiſed to their ſucceſs.

When their mutual congratulations were over, I ſaw the young man was accompanying his miſtreſs, as I imagined, to add his grateful acknowledgments to hers, and that they might not have their more pleaſing converſation broke in upon, by a return they thought neceſſary, I ſlipt out at another door, and wandered on with the ſame agreeable intention.

I had

I had not gone far, when my compaſſion was excited by the ſight of a hut whoſe outward appearance bore every ſign of poverty, and when I entered I found the inſide perfectly correſponded with it. It was one general ſcene of wretchedneſs; the inhabitants were almoſt naked, and ſeemed expiring with hunger.

I was ſo much ſhocked at this ſight, that I could not ſpeak to them till a few tears had rendered my compaſſion leſs painful. During my ſilence they begged relief with all the clamour of extreme neceſſity; but could not be more deſirous to receive than I was to give, which I did liberally, emptying my purſe into the lap of the mother of the family, whom I thought the propereſt treaſurer for the whole.

Without ſtaying to make any acknowledgments, or leaving me time to put my uſual queſtion, the woman ran up ſtairs; upon this a young girl, who ſeemed on the verge of the grave, burſt into tears, and was accompanied in them by all the reſt, except an old man, who ſat by and appeared inſenſible of all that paſſed.

I aſked

I aſked the wretched meagre race what occaſioned this ſudden flow of grief, when I had hoped I had adminiſtered preſent relief to their neceſſities?

The ſickly girl anſwered, that "to re-
"lieve them was beyond the power of
"any being but him who could change
"the heart. My mother's avarice," added ſhe, "will defeat the kind inten-
"tion of your bounty; ſhe is not the
"real parent of any of us. My father
"was eſteemed rich for one in his ſta-
"tion, which tempted the woman who
"has juſt been the object of your gene-
"rous pity, to marry him, and thereby
"to reduce us all, who were the chil-
"dren of a former wife, to the greateſt
"misfortunes that can ariſe from ex-
"treme indigence. She is ſo very co-
"vetous that ſhe will not afford cloath-
"ing either for herſelf or us, or give
"us any wholeſome food; the little ſuſ-
"tenance we obtain juſt ſuffices to keep
"us enough alive to feel the miſery of
"continual famine. My poor father's
"underſtanding was impaired by a ſtroke
"of the palſy, in a year after ſhe mar-
"ried him, happily loſing thereby the
"quick ſenſe of his misfortunes. Be-
"fore

" fore I was brought into ſo very bad a
" ſtate of health, I uſed my utmoſt en-
" deavours to prevail on her to let me
" go to ſervice; but the expence of
" cloathing me as was neceſſary, if I
" left home, appeared ſo formidable to
" her that ſhe would never come into
" it."

I pitied this wretched family more than ever; and when the woman came down again I tried all the arguments I could deviſe to prevail upon her to ſuffer me to have the laying out of part of the money I had given her; but this attempt ſo exaſperated her that ſhe loaded me with abuſe, and I went away the object of her rage and fury inſtead of her gratitude; but was fully reſolved to prevail with Lord Dorcheſter to adminiſter relief in a more judicious manner to the reſt of this miſerable family.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

I HAD now diſburthened myſelf of the riches I had felt an incumbrance, though they were a leſs evil to me than to many others, ſince they would have lain by me neglected and unthought of, inſtead of betraying me into vice and folly, as is too often the conſequence. But greatly pleaſed with having delivered up a property of which my indifference to it rendered me unworthy, I returned towards home, ſtrangely perplexed with the unaccountable diſpoſitions I had beheld in this ſhort progreſs. This ſubject deeply engaged my thoughts, when they were called from it by the melancholy entreaties of a woman who begged of me. She was ſitting on the graſs, with two little children by her, whom ſhe was crying over.

I was now grieved that my purſe was empty, and reproached myſelf for my too laviſh bounty. Though I was barren of the means of relief, yet I could not forbear liſtening to the poor woman's ſtory, moved by an appearance ſuperior to ſuch a degree of poverty. Her tale was affecting; an air of ſincerity in her ſor-

row would have convinced me of her truth, had I then been taught incredulity by the obſervation of deceit; but at that time I ſhould have believed a more improbable ſtory, as nothing could have appeared ſo incredible to me as that a perſon would utter a falſhood. I found the poor woman was reduced by misfortunes from eaſy circumſtances, and that ſhe, her babes, and her ſick huſband, were really ſtarving. As her diſtreſs was ſo great, I deſired her to accompany me home, where I hoped to be ſupplied with the means of relieving her; and aſſiſted in carrying her children, a burthen too great for her enfeebled body.

Lord Dorcheſter, who was returned before me, being told which way I was gone, came out to ſeek me, and met me in the park with one of the poor woman's babes in my arms, attended by her and the other.

I did not leave him time to enquire how I became thus accompanied; for as ſoon as he approached me I told him "I had been among beggars till I had "learned to beg;" adding, that "after I had ſo much money, it was ſhame"ful to aſk for more; but that I had "ſpent all he had given me in buying "expe-

" experience, in making my own mind " wiſer, and that of ſome others eaſier."

I then gave him an account of all I had done, excuſing my errors by my ignorance of the perverſeneſs of the tempers of his poor neighbours, by which I had been taught that " charity does not " conſiſt alone in giving money; for that " thoſe who beſtow not time and care " ſufficient to diſcover the merit and ne- " ceſſities of the objects of their bounty, " muſt often feed vanity, idleneſs, or " avarice, and render themſelves unable " to relieve real diſtreſs."

Lord Dorcheſter, with a look of ſincere affection, told me, " nothing could make " him ſo happy as my affording him " any opportunity of giving me pleaſure. " His fortune could in no way be ſo con- " ducive to his happineſs; and he " thought I had laid out my money " to the beſt purpoſe that ever any one " did, ſince ſo much experience was " never, he believed, ſo cheaply pur- " chaſed."

He gave me a conſiderable ſum more with a chearfulneſs which ſhewed the ſincerity of his word.

This ſupply afforded me the power of doing every thing requiſite for the poor wo-

man's relief, and of enabling her to avoid the like diſtreſs for the future. But though money gave me, in this way, great enjoyment, yet I could not be quite pleaſed with the invention of coin. I looked upon it as the means of unhappineſs, and therefore could not forgive it, though it purchaſed me the ſatisfaction of relieving ſome of the evils it occaſioned. It appeared to me equally a ſpur to avarice and an incitement to luxury. The ready exchange of it for all commodities, is, to the vain and voluptuous, as great a temptation to laviſhneſs in expence, as the eaſineſs of laying it up is, to the miſer, to indulge the avaricious deſire of accumulating. People whoſe deſires are inſpired by reaſon alone, can ſoon ſay, "I have "enough of every thing;" but vanity, avarice, and luxury, have no bounds; they who are under their influence ſuffer almoſt as much pain from their ungratified follies as the poor can feel from indigence. I ſoon perceived that luxury was univerſal; even the poorer people enjoyed ſuch a ſhare of it as ſurprized me, when I compared it with the plain ſimplicity in which I had been bred.

I could

I could not reconcile myſelf to manners ſo unlike my own. I was not ſoon acquainted with many of their vices, they were ſo unintelligible to me that I only accuſed them of folly: but yet I ſaw they were void of the ſimplicity I found in my own heart. My Lord's conduct ſhewed him poſſeſſed with many virtues; but ſtill I accuſed him of inconſiſtency, for I could by no means reconcile his cruelty to me with his benevolence to every other perſon. Though I grew too partial to him to continue inconſolable for being ſeparated from my beloved aunt, yet ſtill, often to myſelf, and ſometimes to him, I called that treatment cruel, and bewailed it with many tears; eſpecially when I reflected on what ſhe muſt have ſuffered from the time of my departure; for I confeſs I grieved more for her than for myſelf: my Lord's converſation had charms that afforded me great conſolation; but ſhe could have none. I could not doubt his affection for me; every look, every word, expreſſed it too viſibly to leave any room for uncertainty. His eyes were filled with admiration and tenderneſs; he could ſcarcely endure abſence for an hour; all joy would forſake his counte-

nance the moment he loſt ſight of me. But the inſtant I appeared again, his eyes ſhot raptures, and welcomed me before his tongue could utter a word. It did not ſeem to me unnatural that a perſon who loved another ſo entirely as I was convinced Lord Dorcheſter did me, ſhould be deſirous of ſpending his life in her ſociety. Not that I could excuſe ſo forcible a method of procuring it, nor quite underſtand how ſo ſtrong an affection as rendered my company neceſſary to his happineſs could be conceived in that ſhort time. But I myſelf had found ſuch an attachment grow in ſo ſmall a ſpace, as made it not appear to me abſolutely impoſſible; and in no other way could I form any ſort of excuſe for Lord Dorcheſter's violence, though my heart longed to do it; for he had then got a ſtronger intereſt in it than I at that time imagined. I could not ſuſpect him of any ill deſign againſt my innocence; of all ſuch views I was totally ignorant; I knew not what they meant. The ſhadow of ſuch ſchemes had never been repreſented to my imagination, whoſe ſimple purity received no light from his behaviour; which was ſo modeſt and reſpectful, that equal innocence ſeemed to rule his thoughts. Since I learnt

I learnt how his mind was corrupted by the depravity of cuſtom, I have often wondered at the command over himſelf; but, perhaps, he was fortunate in having none to obſerve him but one ſo blinded by ignorance that ſhe could not eaſily ſuſpect him of ill. I thought his love more tender and more ardent than what my aunt and I had felt for each other; this I attributed to a warmer temper in youth, and to the probability that a friendſhip for one of equal age might be ſtronger than where there was a diſparity of years, as the ſimilitude of taſte and diſpoſition muſt naturally be greater.

A woman ſenſible of the dangers attending her ſituation, might, perhaps, have taken alarm frequently when I ſaw no cauſe for fear; thus far my ignorance was convenient to his deſign, who wiſhed to engage my heart entirely before I could ſuſpect him. For this reaſon an elderly woman was appointed for my ſervant; a woman of ſenſe, and more improved education than any one ought to be who could aſſiſt in ſo bad a purpoſe; for ſhe muſt have known the motive of all the inſtructions given her, to which ſhe ſo cloſely adhered, that I never received the

leaſt hint from her that there ever was known any criminal intercourſe between man and woman. Equal care was taken that no book ſhould fall into my hands, that might leſſen my ignorance in this particular. My aunt's hiſtory was kept as much a ſecret by my Lord as by herſelf, or that might have ſhewn how much our ſex had to fear from the other. To prevent my eyes from being accidentally opened, if I went much about in the neighbourhood, my Lord took care, on one pretence or other, after the little excurſion I have mentioned, that I ſhould never go out without him or my ſervant, who he deſired might attend me when he was obliged to be abſent. By ſuch means was I kept in an ignorance that now appears to me, on reflection, almoſt incredible; perhaps it will ſeem ſtill more ſo to your ladyſhip, for none can comprehend the dulneſs of apprehenſion in the ignorant who never knew that ignorance.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

DURING the remainder of the ſummer, I indulged my natural taſte for rural beauties. Taught to admire nature in all her works, I could want no better entertainment than what the fine ſituation of Lord Dorcheſter's houſe and park afforded me; eſpecially when this was heightened and refined by his converſation. He continued to inſtruct my reaſon and pleaſe my vanity at the ſame time. Child as I was, he treated my underſtanding with deference, and appeared to me moſt happy when he converſed with me. He ſpent almoſt all his time with me, endeavouring to open my mind. When we walked out, or ſat together, under the refreſhing ſhades the park afforded us, he would turn the converſation to the objects around us, explain their natures and their uſes, would lead my thoughts from the leſſer to the greater, from the vegetable creation to the animal œconomy, and ſometimes riſe to ſtill ſublimer ſubjects. A taſk for which nothing but great affection for me could render tolerable to one of an underſtanding ſo far ſuperior. I

could not but be delighted, when I obſerved how gracefully he would, by letting down his own underſtanding, endeavour to raiſe mine more to a level with it; and that with an air of tenderneſs and pleaſure, not of condeſcenſion, which by a ſeeming humility affronts our pride.

I was ſometimes inclined to fancy that he was not ſo ſenſible of my inferiority as I was myſelf: if I made as poor a figure in his opinion as in my own, I thought he could not look on me as a companion worthy of him; and was afraid of mentioning my own conſciouſneſs, leſt I ſhould open his eyes to my folly. None admire knowledge ſo much as the ignorant. My aunt was no philoſopher; my Lord ſeemed inclined to make me one; and when I bluſhed at my ignorance, would tell me that "in removing it he meant not to re-
"preſent what he taught as neceſſary to
"be known, only to open a field to my
"thoughts which ſhould be productive
"of conſtant amuſement, take from ſoli-
"tude all languor and wearineſs, and by
"ſharing my mind in gayer ſcenes, ſecure
"me from the dangers attending a total
"diſſipation;" adding, that "the plea-
"ſure he received from obſerving the
"quickneſs

" quickneſs of my apprehenſions, and the
" clearneſs of my ideas, was no ſmall in-
" ducement to him to continue, as a de-
" light to himſelf, what he deſigned at
" firſt only as an entertainment to me."
Every thing that bears the face of wonder pleaſes a youthful mind. I was charmed with all the novelty which he repreſented to me; I was almoſt introduced into a new world; nature wore a different face to me; my whole mind was engaged in contemplating her works; and it was no ſmall proof of my complaiſance that I ſuffered the acquiring the French tongue to divide my thoughts: but Lord Dorcheſter deſired it, and to pleaſe him I applied to it with as much earneſtneſs as if it had been the higheſt gratification to myſelf. He encouraged me by flattery on the quick progreſs I made, and, by his converſation, would enliven the dull ſtudy of grammar, and teach me the language in great meaſure by diſcourſe.

My Lord's endeavours to amuſe were not wholly applied to my underſtanding: my heart was to have its ſhare of pleaſure. He made me the diſtributor of his favours. If he gave relief to the poor, it went through my hands. He enabled me

to

to remove the diſtreſſes to which I had been a witneſs, and indulged me in my deſire of ſearching after wretchedneſs in order to redreſs it; requiring me never to go unaccompanied by my ſervant, when he could not attend me; a care which I then eſteemed an additional obligation. I was more officiouſly obeyed in the houſe than he was: his ſervants ſeemed to have learnt from their maſter to watch every look that might ſignify my inclination, which they would not give time to riſe to a wiſh. They found this the ſerene road to their Lord's favour, to which I was certainly indebted for all their aſſiduity. Had real regard for me inſpired any one of them, he would have ſhewn it more eſpecially by warning me againſt the baſe views which they who are acquainted with the manners of mankind muſt know their Lord entertained.

In this manner my time paſſed, till the beginning of winter. I was conſtantly employed, but never weary, for every employment was made an amuſement; and I had nothing to prevent my being really happy but the loſs of my aunt's company, and the melancholy reflections which would ariſe whenever I thought of her

her ſolitary ſtate, and the grief ſhe muſt feel on account of her uncertainty concerning me. Theſe would intrude themſelves on my livelieſt hours: if I enjoyed any entertainment, the remembrance of her would check my pleaſure and reproach me for having given way to any one while ſhe was in affliction. Could I have baniſhed theſe reflections, I ſhould have been extremely happy. The change of ſeaſon had not robbed me of all my pleaſures, it only varied them. The eaſe of my mind never depended on the gay ſcenes of nature, nor can my chearfulneſs be clouded by heavy ſkies overſhadowing the ſun. Every thing that is agreeable is not neceſſary; the decay of all vernal beauties ſo little affected me, that I was ſhocked when my Lord told me we muſt ſoon remove to London. I felt a ſort of dread at the thoughts of a change of place; the cruel ſtate of my mind, during the only journey I had ever taken, had made me aſſociate very painful ideas with that of travelling.

My Lord endeavoured to perſuade me that I ſhould prefer London to my country habitation during the winter. He told me of the variety of diverſions and crowd

of

of company, which there, in conſtant ſucceſſion, invite to amuſements.

This appeared to me no bad opportunity of renewing a ſuit from which I had for ſome time deſiſted; and accordingly I told him that ſince that place afforded ſuch various entertainments, he could not find the loſs of ſo poor a companion as myſelf; it would, therefore, be the nobleſt proof of his affection to comply with my ardent wiſhes of being reſtored to my aunt, whereby he would bind me in eternal gratitude to his generous humanity.

Deſpair of ſucceſs had made me ſo long ſilent on this ſubject, that I believe my Lord was the more ſhocked at hearing me renew my requeſt: I never ſaw greater diſtreſs in a countenance than was then impreſſed on his; he made me no immediate anſwer, till ſeeming a little to recover himſelf, with a melancholy air, which improved the beauty of his face, then bedewed with tears, he preſſed my hand in his, and putting the other round my waiſt, "can my lovely Ophelia," ſaid he, "wiſh "to leave me? can you be inſenſible to "the misfortune it would be to me to loſe "that ſociety from which I can ſcarcely "bear an hour's abſence? Aſk any thing

"but

" but yourſelf, and judge of my love by " the pleaſure with which I ſhall grant it: " but life has no charms for me but in " giving me the power of converſing " with you, and to relinquiſh one is giv- " ing up the other."

I was ſo moved with the effect of what I had already ſaid, that I could no longer urge my ſuit; I could not even wiſh to go while he ſeemed averſe to it, but told him, " It was not juſt to be offended with me " for a deſire to return to one with whom " I had been ſo long united in affection, " conſequently ought to love better than " he could me in ſo ſhort a time." " Ceaſe, my deareſt life!" interrupted he; " ceaſe to excuſe yourſelf by an apo- " logy more cruel than the requeſt. Com- " pare not the cold, the dull affection of " an aunt, to that you have inſpired me " with; her heart is incapable of ſuch " ſtrong ſenſations. In pity to the tor- " tures your indifference gives me, con- " ceal it; allow me a poſſibility of flat- " tering myſelf again that you make me " ſome return of affection for all I feel for " you; do not throw me any more back to " the pains of cruelleſt diſappointment, as " you have now done by the renewal of a " deſire to which I had hoped your heart

" had

" had ceaſed to prompt you. Surely I " am the moſt miſerable of men; to be " able to impart and teach you every " thing but that on which my happineſs " moſt depends. Can your mind only " receive impreſſions? Is the heart of my " Ophelia inſenſible to no diſtreſs but " mine? Will ſhe who endeavours to re- " lieve all other wretchedneſs increaſe that " which ſhe alone can cure?"

Tears accompanied his words, and his head ſunk on my ſhoulder. I could not forbear mingling a few with his. I grieved for having afflicted him; and wiping his eyes with my handkerchief, endeavoured to repair what I had done with the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of my affection, which indeed I never felt ſo powerful as at that moment; and, with a warmth which my heart inſpired, aſſured him " that gratitude to my " aunt for her care of and goodneſs to my " helpleſs infancy, and pity for what ſhe " muſt have ſuffered on my account, were " the only ſentiments that could make me " prefer her ſociety to his."

My unwillingneſs to give him pain made me ever after ſilent on this ſubject: I thought ſuch tender affection deſerved my gratitude; and ſhould have looked upon urging this requeſt as a greater breach

breach of that duty towards him, than my deſiſting from an unavailing attempt was of my want of duty to my aunt.

But neither the relinquiſhing that hope, nor the kindeſt expreſſions I could uſe, had power to raiſe my Lord's ſpirits; his dejection laſted ſome days, during which he told me, "all I did now was out of "compaſſion, what I ſaid before was the "dictates of my inclination; and while "that thought laſted, it was not in the "power of words to give him conſo-"lation." However, theſe melancholy impreſſions, which ſpread their infection over my heart, wore off before the time of our departure.

My Lord's ſpirits were not raiſed by the neceſſity of changing his abode: he ſighed after the ſeaſon of leiſure which left him to the free enjoyment of my company; whereas his winter occupations muſt frequently divide us. This was a mortifying reflection for me, who, both by inclination and cuſtom, was now taught to think his continual converſation abſolutely neceſſary to my eaſe of mind, while I was detained from my ſolitude. But he would endeavour to perſuade me that I ſhould be better pleaſed in London; that

that novelty and gaiety would more than recompence me for his enforced abſence; and with this notion he would increaſe his dejection, though I often told him this ſeemed rather the fear of hate than love, ſince his uneaſineſs aroſe from the apprehenſion of my being pleaſed. He raved at my inſenſibility in terms that I could not well comprehend, and made me find that ignorance was dangerous when people are eaſily offended, for without deſign I had ſeveral times diſpleaſed him.

CHAP. XIII.

THE day before we left the place, Lord Dorcheſter told me that "it "would be adviſable for me to be ſilent "as to my birth and former way of life, "as well as to the means by which I was "taken from it; for the oddneſs of the "event would make people curious to "ſee me, and ſo attentive in obſerving me "as would greatly pain my natural baſh-"fulneſs; and that if they perceived my "ignorance of the cuſtoms of the world

"it

" it would ſubject me to ridicule." He therefore adviſed me " to give way only " to ſilent wonder, if any thing ſurprized " me, except when he only was preſent; " for to him my ſimplicity and natural " remarks muſt always be moſt delightful; but that to others it would be unneceſſary to give any further account of " myſelf than that I was under his care."

Either my pride or my reaſon was hurt by the concealment my Lord propoſed. I believe the former. Though untaught, reaſon might have made me condemn thoſe who could ridicule unavoidable ignorance; yet only pride could make me ſo warm in my cenſure. I told my Lord that " the openneſs of my diſpoſition " made me ill qualified for any concealment; that it would be ſcarcely poſſible " for me to hide my ignorance entirely; " and when any ſigns of it broke forth, " it might make me appear ridiculous to " ſuch as knew not my education; whereas thoſe who did could not be ſurprized " at the neceſſary effects of it. That " were it a misfortune or a fault, it " ſhould rather excite pity than mirth. To " triumph over the weakneſs of others," I added, " is cruel, but when their inferi-

" ority

" ority proceeds merely from the want of
" advantage and opportunities of im-
" provement, 'tis no leſs fooliſh than
" inhuman to be proud of a ſuperiority
" ſo obtained. To practice virtue is to
" live up to the dictates of pure and divine
" wiſdom; to know our duty, the end
" and the deſign of our creation; and to
" make it our rule of action is to adorn
" with pure and warm devotion the au-
" thor of our being: to be not only
" humane and benevolent to our fellow
" creatures, but mindful even to what we
" eſteem the loweſt work of God, is
" wiſdom and knowledge beyond what
" your arts can teach; for by what I
" have already ſeen, in leading men after
" vain purſuits they make them neglect
" the moſt important duties."

My Lord anſwered, " that what I ſaid
" was more agreeable to reaſon than
" cuſtom. That the multitude were fool-
" iſh and inconſiderate, and would both
" blame and praiſe without juſt cauſe.
" Such opinions indeed a rational perſon
" might think below their regard; but
" experience would teach them that
" fools, like other reptiles, could teize us
" with their noiſe, notwithſtanding our
" juſt ſenſe of their inſignificance.

He

He then repreſented to me "how diſa-
"greeable I ſhould find it to have all
"eyes upon me wherever I appeared;
"every one, if I ſpoke, liſtening to hear
"what the fair ſavage would ſay, and
"calling natural reaſon and ſenſe, becauſe
"little known to them, ridiculous igno-
"rance."

If he had not mollified the term of ſavage, he might have incurred the anger ſo juſtly due to the people he deſcribed; but he gilded it with love and flattery; and the vexation I had received at my firſt appearance, from being gazed at, was ſo freſh in my remembrance, that it prevailed upon me to conſent to the ſilence he required concerning my paſt life.

This was not the only thing for which he was to prepare me: he now informed me that we ſhould not live in the ſame houſe. This ſhocked me, I knew not why; I could not reſtrain a ſtarting tear; I felt a proof of abated love; but pride checked my uttering the accuſation, whilſt reſentment, under the appearance of ſurprize and curioſity, enquired the reaſon of it. My Lord told me, that "his
"houſe was not large enough to receive
"me, with convenience to myſelf; be-
ſide,

" ſide, that the great numbers of people " he was obliged to ſee upon buſineſs, " would be very troubleſome to me." The delicacy of theſe reaſons, which I did not doubt were real, made me ſpeak plainer than reſentment had done; I aſſured him that " nothing could be ſo vex- " atious to me as being abſent from him, " and that were we in different houſes I " muſt loſe a great deal of his company " which I might otherwiſe enjoy, eſpe- " cially as buſineſs would engage him ſo " much at home. For were I under the " ſame roof, the ſhorteſt intervals would " allow me the ſight of him."

Though he was tranſported with my reaſon for begging not to be ſeparated from him, yet he plauſibly evaded all I could ſay, and brought me to acquieſce though not to approve.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

THE next day we bid adieu to the delightful place, where every thing had ſeemed dedicated to my inclination, and began our journey to London. The firſt day paſſed agreeably; the ſecond was favourable for travelling, and we ſet out early. But ſtopping on the road to breakfaſt, my Lord left me, and went to make a viſit in the neighbourhood, where I was to call upon him after our neceſſary refreſhment,

Being told the chariot was ready, I went down ſtairs, and finding it at the door, got in, ordering the ſervant of the houſe to tell my Lord's ſervants to follow, not ſeeing them in the readineſs I expected.

As I had no doubt but my Lord's ſervants knew better where to call upon him than I did, I made no attempt towards giving directions, which could have been but very imperfect. Indeed I had ſcarcely time to ſeat myſelf, he drove on with ſuch rapidity. I was not inclined to complain of the haſte, for no pace could ſeem too faſt for me that was to carry me to the companion whoſe abſence, ſhort as it

it was, I found time to regret. But after proceeding with unabated ſpeed for half an hour, I began to wonder at the diſtance which my Lord had called trifling; for we had gone ſomes miles, and yet were not arrived at his friend's houſe. I grew alarmed, and could not help fearing that the coachman had not received ſufficient inſtructions; I called to him, and exerted my voice to its higheſt key to make him hear, but all in vain; the road was extremely ſtoney, and the noiſe the chariot made ſo great, that my weak voice was drowned by it. I then recollected that I had never known it rattle ſo before; this might be the effect of the ſtoneyneſs of the road; but yet I wondered I ſhould not have found it, in ſome degree, in ſmoother ways. The lining and inſide appeared ſo much the ſame, I could not ſuſpect I was in a different equipage, till the coachman, looking half way round, I thought, though I had but an imperfect glance of his face, that it was not my Lord's ſervant. I then looked out at the painting on the outſide of the doors, and was immediately ſenſible that I was not in my Lord's vehicle.

I now

I now grew ſtrangely alarmed, though I knew not what to think, and called to the man to ſtop, as loud as I poſſibly could, but with as little ſucceſs as before; for my voice had not received equal ſtrength with my impatience; and after having ſcreamed myſelf hoarſe, was reduced to wait in ſilence for a lucky opportunity, to do what my efforts could not; imagining ſomething muſt ſoon ſtop our extraordinary ſpeed. In this hope, however, I was diſappointed, for it continued ſome hours longer, which, fretted and fatigued as I was, appeared to me an age. At laſt, the chariot drove up to a houſe, and ſtopped at the door; but I was by that time ſo confounded and hurried, that I was in a kind of ſtupefaction, and ſcarcely knew how to aſk the queſtions I wanted to have anſwered.

A fat old woman hobbled out of the houſe to meet us, and opened the chariot door. My conſternation was too great to allow of much connection in my ideas; I cried out, on her taking hold of me, for her appearance was diſguſtful, who are you? where's my Lord? what place is this? not waiting for an-

ſwers to the reſpective queſtions till all were uttered.

" Do not be in ſuch a hurry, ſweet " young lady," interrupted the fat gentlewoman, " you are with friends, my " pretty dear; his lordſhip's honour will " be here by and by. You know he " muſt not come in broad day-light; " but fear not, as ſoon as it is dark he " will fly to your arms like any ſparrow to his mate; and pretty ones " they are in faith. Ay, ay, he has an " hawk's eye for beauty, like to like, " beauty to beauty, it ſhould be ſo. All " the women long for him, and happy " the ſhe that he vouchſafes to take " notice of."

If the firſt ſight of this woman diſguſted me, her manner and diſcourſe were ſtill more odious. As ſhe attempted to lead me into the houſe, I inſenſibly reſiſted; I had no reaſon to refuſe it, but confuſion and diſlike directed my actions, and I ſhould ſcarcely have known how ſtrongly they operated, had not the old gentlewoman continued, " why " do you ſtare ſo, ſweet madam? though " I am a ſtranger, I will be as true and " truſty to you as ever a woman you " could

" could meet with. You ſeem hugely ti-
" merſome truly, but I warrant we ſhall
" ſee you more couragiouſer by and by."

Conquering reſiſtance which was unintended, I ſuffered myſelf to be led into the houſe, where ſhe continued talking in the ſame fulſome manner, till no longer able to endure her, I deſired to be left alone; a favour ſhe would not grant, without a little prelude to her compliance. " A pretty dear," cryed ſhe, " ſhe wants " to think a little; well, well, think as " much as you pleaſe till evening. You " tender ones love to pay it off with think-" ing: well, thoughts are free, as they " ſay, or the Lord have mercy upon us." Had not her words flowed even more freely than her thoughts could riſe, I ſhould have liked her company better, and found leſs occaſion to cry out for mercy, though ſhe ſeemed to think freedom of thought ſo dangerous. The old woman, indeed, was not miſtaken in ſuppoſing I wanted to think, for I really had occaſion for a little time to compoſe my mind, in order to get ſome light into this ſtrange event; but little could reflection give me; I was more than ever at a loſs to gueſs at Lord Dorcheſter's

meaning in all this, and thinking more increaſed my perplexity. I repented that my diſlike to the woman's converſation had made me forbear trying if ſhe could give me any information as to my Lord's intention, which was not impoſſible, as ſhe ſeemed ſo well apprized of the time he was to come there. My repentance was in no danger of being long, as a ſincere amendment may reaſonably comfort the repentant perſon, for in about an hour ſhe returned, and gave me an opportunity of repairing my neglect, though not ſo immediately as at her firſt appearance I hoped to do; for till I had ſtood her diſcharge of nonſenſe, I had no chance of being heard. Before I could make an attempt to ſpeak, ſhe began.

" What ſtill wiſhing, and wiſhing the ſun
" to make haſte to bed? yes, yes, to be ſure,
" the moon gives a more prettier light to
" ſuch a ſweet pair as you are. Well! a
" handſomer couple one would not wiſh to
" ſee in a ſummer's day; you are a per-
" fect beauty, ſweeting; and a more come-
" lier gentleman never trod this earth.
" But, my pretty jewel, one cannot
" live upon ſheer love; you will love

" the

" the better for a little good eating and " drinking. Do not think you ſhall be " ſtarved in this houſe; here it comes."

Accordingly the cloth was laid and the table ſpread in leſs time than ſhe had ſpent in her preface to it; and ſhe ſo notably beſtirred herſelf in this part of her buſineſs, that I could not make her liſten to the queſtions I put concerning the reaſons of my Lord's ſo ſuddenly altering the intentions with which he left me. I hoped for more attention when that part of her employ was over, but found her thoughts had ſtill a ſtronger attraction; for when the table was covered, her whole faculties were ingroſſed in doing honour to her entertainment, on which ſhe made ſuch depredations, that I no longer wondered at her bulk. I had little inclination to eat, therefore repeated my queſtions, but got no anſwer, except, " ſhe knew nothing of that; the " firſt ſhe had heard of the affair was, " that my Lord would be there as that " night, and that ſhe might expect me " in the morning; as for any farther de- " ſign, ſhe was ignorant of it." Finding I could learn little from her, I intreated her abſence, as ſoon as ſhe had

finiſhed her meal, and determined to wait my Lord's arrival with what patience I could. From him I hoped to learn the occaſion of this ſtrange whim, for as ſuch I could but eſteem it; and repined at my fate, that had ſubjected me to be the ſport of any one's caprice; for it had really a very diſagreeable effect on my ſpirits. However, as I grew more compoſed, I began to perſuade myſelf that a man whoſe love had been ſo very ſincere could not mean to diſtreſs me; he could not be much to blame; chance muſt certainly be partly in fault. With theſe reflections adminiſtering what conſolation I could to my mind, I waited the cloſe of day, and when that arrived, I durſt not call for artificial light, leſt my fat landlady ſhould accompany the candles; and ſhe did not bring them voluntarily, I ſuppoſe, from a notion that I was aſleep; for I got away by expreſſing a wearineſs, which was real, though a deſire of ſleep was not the conſequence of it

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

AFTER I had been about an hour in the dark, I heard an equipage drive into the yard. My heart now felt a flutter it had never known before; this being the firſt time of any long ſeparation from my Lord, I was, till now, ignorant of the pain or pleaſure of expectation. I knew not how very dear his company was to me, till taught by being a whole day without it. I immediately thought I penetrated his deſign in this whimſical adventure; imagining that he certainly had contrived it as a puniſhment for my deſire of leaving him, and to prevent my re-urging that requeſt, by making me better acquainted with my own heart, which could never be able to bear his abſence.

My impatience would have carried me to meet him, had not the want of light made me unable to find my way; however I was pleaſed to diſcover, by the haſte with which he ran up ſtairs, that he was not leſs impatient to ſee me. The door flew open, while his hobbling guide

puffed after him, with a pace ſo unequal to his, that when he entered the room the glimmering of her diſtant light ſerved only to give us a very imperfect view of each other. I ſcarcely could diſcern him before I found myſelf in his arms. The rapidity with which he flew to me, and the eagerneſs of his embrace, aſtoniſhed and ſtartled me. I never had ſeen any degree of ſuch familiarity in him. I was not ſenſible of any impropriety in the expreſſions of affection; but without knowing a reaſon for it, I was diſturbed with this addreſs. I could not think ſuch violence the neceſſary conſequence of love. I was as much rejoiced, I imagined, as he could be, and yet ſuch behaviour did not appear natural to me. Suddenly we heard a ſcream, accompanied by ſome oaths in a hoarſer tone, which ſerved as baſs to the ſhrill treble of the affrighted old gentlewoman, and terrified me to a great degree. We preſently heard their ſteps upon the ſtairs, and a man crying out "where is this diſgrace to my fa-"mily? reſtore her to me, or this ſword "ſhall force her from you!" "Never!" anſwered the gentleman with me, in a voice quite different from my Lord's,

"never

"never ſhall ſhe be torn from theſe arms; "with my life will I defend her!" and caught faſt hold of me, who was endeavouring to run as far from theſe horrid threats as I could. Had not fear overpowered my ſenſes, I might have perceived there muſt be ſome miſtake in this affair; but fright and ignorance made me incapable of drawing any rational concluſions, and I had little chance of recovering myſelf, as the old woman entered trembling, with a candle, followed by a middle-aged gentleman, who had his drawn ſword in his hand and fury in his eyes. A lady about the ſame age came laſt, though not behindhand in anger, if one might judge by her countenance or words, both very expreſſive; but not the ſhrillneſs of her voice, or ſharpneſs of her tongue, a woman's only weapons, could have terrified me ſo much as that ſame inſtrument of ſteel. Its appearance was ſo aweful in the eyes of the gentleman I had ſuppoſed Lord Dorcheſter, that he let me go, that he might the better oppoſe his aſſailant in the ſame manner; and the firſt uſe I made of my liberty was to fly to a cloſet at the other end

end of the room, wherein I bolted myſelf with the utmoſt expedition; for which I might not ſo conveniently have found time, had not the lady puſhed her fat guide with a violence which her legs, oppreſſed by their burden, could not ſupport.

Down fell the mighty load of fleſh upon the ground; and the lady, not expecting to overthrow ſuch a mountain, had exerted her ſtrength too far, and by the old woman's giving way was ſo drawn off her bias that ſhe fell over her.

Though I continued to tremble more than did honour to my courage, yet I made uſe of the privilege the glaſs door to the cloſet afforded me, obſerving through it the ſkirmiſh from which I was ſo happily delivered. The clamours grew intolerable; the old gentleman treated the young one with fury, the younger returned it with ſcorn; names quite new to me were given and returned; each called aloud for vengeance, but neither haſtened to take it. Their ſwords ſhone bright indeed, but appeared ſafe as in their ſcabbards; as they were not quite reſplendent enough to dazzle the eyes, they ſeemed perfectly innocent.

More vigorouſly did our ſofter ſex exert itſelf: the lady adminiſtered fuel to her own anger by reviling the ſtumbling block that had ignominiouſly brought her to the ground. She called her bawd; ennobling every ſentence with that name, which was ſo unknown to me that I imagined it a ſynonimous term for a fat woman. She accuſed her of ruining her daughter; and having worked herſelf up into a proper ſpirit, fell to beating her moſt unmercifully.

The victim of her rage roared all the time as if ſhe expected every blow would end the life ſhe had nouriſhed with ſo much pleaſure and care. At laſt, finding that defence not ſufficient to deliver her from an enemy whoſe ears had been too much accuſtomed to her own "troublous "uproar" to be capable of being wounded by clamour, ſhe tried her ſtrength, and ſtruggled with ſuch ſucceſs, that ſhe extricated her arms from under her antagoniſt, and returned the blows. The battle now grew very hot: fierce were the attacks and vigorous the defence: tongues, inſtead of drums, animated the combatants; for they did not ſuſpend the exerciſe of ſpeech, though their hands ſufficiently pro-

proclaimed their animoſity to perſons of any tolerable apprehenſion. But they aſſaulted each others ears with as much violence as their caps. Abuſe flew as thick as blows; and it was not long before they were both uncoiffed. The loſs of one cap expoſed to view a fine head of grey hair, though then cruelly diſhevelled, that ſeemed to denote more maturity of reaſon and coolneſs of brain than was agreeable to what had paſſed. The other ſeized theſe hoary honours; the reverence they ſhould have inſpired being totally extinguiſhed by envy, which gave redoubled rage to the enemy: the ſame accident happening to herſelf, unfortunately expoſed a hairleſs head, for Time had been more cruel to her; however a few graſps made ſuch violent depredations, that, as Shakeſpear ſays, "ſhe made theſe odds all even;" for, getting the better of the partiality of Time, ſhe reduced her adverſary to the ſame bald ſtate as herſelf.

While the women ſhewed an implacable deſire of revenge, the wiſer men ſtill contented themſelves with only declaring their thirſt for vengeance. Their reſolutions ſeemed all for blood and murder: every word threatened maiming, ſcarifications, wounds,

wounds, or death; but they were too great philoſophers not to govern their actions, though their unruly tongues could not be controuled. They brandiſhed their ſwords, but each was careful to avoid giving any ſcratch that might exaſperate his antagoniſt. In ſhort, they ſtormed ſo exactly in the ſame key that neither found himſelf ſo inferior to the other as to be reduced to call in a ſharper aſſiſtant. Nor could either prevail on himſelf to attempt the deſtruction each ſwore to effect, till the old gentleman recollecting he might gain the honour of a murder without danger of a mortal reſiſtance, prudently changed the object of his threats, and calling to me under the flattering denomination of his ſhameleſs daughter, ſwore he would break down the door if I did not open it inſtantly; and as ſolemnly aſſuring me that when he could get me within his reach he would pierce my diſobedient heart. This, no doubt, was a moſt alluring invitation; he would have had an excellent chance of bringing me out of my ſanctuary by ſuch a declaration, had I not grown ſenſible that I owed my danger to a miſtake, and therefore the ſureſt way of avoiding the one was to rectify the other.

Though

Though as ſoon as I became convinced of the error which occaſioned this buſtle, I began to find ſome entertainment in the fray, yet my ſpirits were in too diſcompoſed a ſituation to be much pleaſed. I reſolved to ſhew myſelf, to quiet the tempeſt, but knew not how to perform it ſafely: ſhould that old man remain as obſtinate in his error as the young one, he might deprive me of all ſenſe before I could reſtore him to his ſenſes. In age, anger will be ſometimes quicker than the ſight; I therefore was reſolved not to ſurrender at diſcretion, but purpoſed to capitulate before I ventured out of my fortreſs. I called out to them that "they "were all miſtaken in me; that I was "united to none of them either by blood "or affection; and if the gentleman who "ſuppoſed himſelf my father would but "give his eyes leiſure to convince him of "his error, I would come forth to them."

The promiſe I aſked was given me, and I opened my door; but I had not gone two ſteps into the room before the old man, whoſe eyes were grown dim by age, and his reaſon obſcured by paſſion, ran at me with his ſword drawn. I was flying back into my aſylum, from whence I ſhould

ſhould not eaſily have been again tempted forth, had not the young gentleman reſcued me from the ſudden end with which my exiſtence was threatened by catching hold of the outrageous father. Upon the promiſe of not letting him go till better light had cleared up the miſtake, I conſented to venture to approach the candle, which immediately ſhewed them all that they were in an error, and gave riſe to a new kind of uproar, one exclaiming for his Harriet, the other crying out for his daughter; and all appeared ſo mortified to find a ſtranger in her place, that I began to apprehend a bad reception, eſpecially as I could give but very indifferent anſwers to their various queſtions. We were not long at a loſs to comprehend that all this confuſion was occaſioned by the ſervant at the inn having informed me of the readineſs of this young nobleman's equipage, inſtead of the lady ſo furiouſly conteſted, and by my heedleſſneſs, which had prevented me from diſcovering the blunder. The view of the company was now to deceive each other; all declared the impoſſibility of going in ſearch of the lady I had perſonated, in ſo dark and ſo ſtormy a night; eſpecially as the road

was

was intricate, and hard to find. But as it appeared this was a feint; for the old gentleman, I ſuppoſe, conſidering that it would be difficult for him to ſteal a march as he was lodged in the enemy's quarter's, thought it better to relinquiſh his hopes, in order to diſappoint the other. Accordingly he told him "he was convinced "he only deſigned to bubble him, in lull-"ing him into ſecurity, by agreeing with "him in this point, and then ſetting forth "after the fugitive when he imagined his "eaſy dupe was faſt aſleep."

He acknowledged "he had entertained "the ſame intention himſelf; but recol-"lecting how difficult it would be to ex-"ecute it, he was reſolved to make it "equally ſo to both; and would not go "into bed the whole night, nor ſuffer his "horſes to be unharneſſed, nor his ſer-"vants to enter the houſe, unleſs his "Lordſhip would conſent that their ſer-"vants ſhould be ſo lodged together that "they could not be ignorant of each "other's motions." Beſides which, he "required that the keys of the houſe doors "ſhould be depoſited in my hands, and that "I ſhould not deliver them up till they met "next morning at day-break; promiſing "then

" then to carry me to the town from " whence I had by miſtake been brought."

The ill grace with which the young nobleman agreed to a propoſal that it was to no purpoſe to reject, was a ſufficient proof that the old gentleman had not miſtaken his views. A ſupper was now ſerved up, which I ſuppoſed was intended for a more amicable entertainment. Every one eat as their ſeveral diſappointments would permit them, but none ſo little as myſelf. The fatigue and great agitation of ſpirits which I had that day endured, affected me very much; and the uneaſineſs I imagined Lord Dorcheſter would be under on my account, with my uncertainty of finding him at the town where I was to be carried the next day, was an additional weight to my ſpirits. However, melancholy or ill humour made us appear much upon an equality; not a word was uttered by one of the company; the dumb ſhew of civility was ſcarcely kept up; and as ſoon as ſupper was ended, the elderly pair deſired to have the condition immediately complied with, and then to be ſhewn to their chamber.

The young Lord would have deferred the delivery of the keys, on pretence of the

the earlineſs of the hour, but prudence, or poſitiveneſs, qualities to be expected in old age, rejected all his evaſions, in a manner that ſhewed his folly in preſuming to form expectations on the eaſy credulity of one who had arrived at the age of ſuſpicion.

At laſt, yielding to neceſſity, he delivered the keys into my hands, at the ſame time intreating me to allow him an hour of my company; aſſuring me in a whiſper, that, "could he obtain that favour, he ſhould "eſteem the accident to which he ſhould "owe it as a very fortunate one." Adding, that "a glance of my charms muſt ef-"face the impreſſion which any other "might have made on a heart that had "never felt their ſuperior excellence."

This bombaſt compliment was unanſwerable to my grovelling genius; ſo I attempted not to reply, and found no inclination to grant his requeſt; for the familiarity of behaviour which confounded and ſurprized me, when I took him for Lord Dorcheſter, appeared odious to me ſince I knew him to be another.

My room was cloſe to that wherein the gentleman and lady lay; as ſoon as I got into it, I bolted my door, the better to ſecure

ſecure the truſt repoſed in me, fearing leſt any attempt might be made by the young Lord on the keys in my cuſtody. Tho' I was not acquainted with the merits of the cauſe, yet I found myſelf inclined to the ſide of the parents; they had a natural right over their daughter; and might juſtly have demanded more duty from her, than, according to the appearances of the affair, they ſeemed to me to have received. They had, among the articles of agreement, ſtipulated for my lying near them, which ſecured me from moleſtation. Fatigue got the better of vexation, and gave me, perhaps, a quieter night than any of the family.

CHAP. XVI.

HAD not a habit of early riſing taught me to awake at break of day, the noiſe in this houſe of confuſion would have

——Broke the bands of ſleep aſunder,
And rous'd me, like a rattling peal of thunder.

The

The eagerneſs to depart raiſed them all at once. The ſervants were haſtened, they themſelves hurried, and every thing was ordered with ſo much noiſe and buſtle that all were confounded; and their intention was retarded by their eagerneſs to put it in execution.

I, by proceeding without any extraordinary haſte, was dreſſed and ready before any of the company; and my ſpirits being elevated by my approaching departure from a houſe I had ſo little reaſon to like, I found ſome entertainment in obſerving how much they hindered each other by their general hurry. At laſt, however, we got into the reſpective vehicles; the young Lord, alone, in his, I with the old gentleman and lady. The former had preſſed me to accept of a place in his equipage: but though neither of them ſeemed to promiſe a very amiable ſociety, yet the others appeared as if they would be the leaſt troubleſome.

To be alone in the midſt of crowds has been the counterpart of that boaſt of abſtracted philoſophy, ſo often, tho' ſo ſeldom, with reaſon, pretended to, of never being leſs alone than when alone; but my companions might, without vanity, have

have claimed all the honour that can ariſe from that ſublime neglect of every thing around us; for had each been the only being on earth. there could not have exiſted leſs ſociety: an abſolute ſilence was preſerved during the whole road; and ſuch is the force of example, that though nothing could be more foreign to my nature, yet I followed it implicitly, and was as dumb as my companions. In this unſociable way we travelled till the beſt part of the day was ſpent; for not having proceeded with the expedition I had done the day before, I found it a long journey, and ſomewhat the more ſo for growing very hungry; for none of the company would ſtop on the road. It was too much to mortify at once two ſuch natural appetites as hunger and the love of talking; but I could meet with no redreſs. I did, indeed, break ſilence juſt to ſignify my opinion of the neceſſity there was for a little refreſhment both for us and the horſes; but the only conſequence of it was a ſurly ſentence from the old lady by way of anſwer, who in a grumbling tone, ſaid "thoſe were lucky who were ſo much at "their eaſe as to think of ſuch things; "for her part, her daughter had given

"her

" her dinner and ſupper too; and if I " had not been careleſs and fooliſh I might " now have been where I ſhould be." Thus rebuffed, I reſumed the ſilence, which was never after broken by any of the company, except by the cough of the old gentleman, who was ſomewhat phthyſical.

When we arrived at the inn from which I had been ſo ſtrangely carried, the firſt perſon I ſaw was Lord Dorcheſter, who I afterwards underſtood, and then hoped, was watching at the door. He rather lifted than handed me out of the coach; receiving me with an embrace, which I frankly returned, overjoyed at being once more reſtored to him.

My Lord led me into the inn, and with looks of inexpreſſible delight repeated his congratulations on my arrival. He told me, that having waited at his friend's houſe long after the time he expected me to call on him, he grew uneaſy leſt ſome accident had befallen me, and came back to the inn to learn the occaſion of my delay. He did not long remain in ignorance. He found a very handſome young woman in the inn yard, almoſt frantick; all the people gathered about her, while ſhe, inſenſible of the ridicule to which ſhe

expoſed

expoſed herſelf, lamented her ill-fortune, and uttered all the exclamations of deſpair. Though the young lady's features were altered by fear and anguiſh, yet my Lord recollected that he had been acquainted with her in London, where ſhe was educated by an aunt, with whom ſhe lived till her father, who, though a man of fortune, was vulgar in manners and low in underſtanding, gave her his ſervant for a mother-in-law.

The ſcene was changed: he was now reduced to a more abject ſervitude than his bride was in before. This woman inſiſted on her daughter in law's returning home; thinking her, while at a diſtance, more out of her power than was agreeable to her love for her new acquired dominion. Lord Dorcheſter had heard of this melancholy change in the young lady's way of life, and had pitied her, but was now alarmed by the apprehenſions of ſome much greater diſtreſs. He enquired the cauſe of her diſtracted behaviour, and received for anſwer "that it was owing to "another young lady's having by miſtake "gone in the chariot deſigned for her;" by which means ſhe was left without a guide

guide to the place where ſhe was to go; but the occaſion of her being ſo very much diſtreſſed about it they could not tell, nor what ſhe meant by continually exclaiming that "ſhe was undone ſhould ſhe be diſ-"covered, and was the moſt miſerable "wretch upon earth."

My Lord aſked who it was that had gone in the conveyance ſhe ſo much regretted, when one of his ſervants perceiving him in the crowd, came up, and anſwered his queſtion by telling him "it "muſt be Miſs Ophelia Lenox, for ſhe "was no where to be found, and one of "the ſervants of the inn had confeſſed, "that ſuppoſing it her equipage, he had "informed her it was ready." Another belonging to the houſe ſoon confirmed this, by declaring "he ſaw me get into "it, and had received orders from me to "bid the ſervants follow directly."

My Lord was polite enough to tell me that he was now a fit companion for the diſappointed lady, being almoſt as mad as ſhe was; till his mind received ſome conſolation by conſidering that the miſtake could not laſt long, and that he might get ſuch information from her as would enable him to overtake me. Upon

on this, he prevailed with her to go into a room, where he could more conveniently enquire into the affair, and ſhe might with more decency indulge her grief.

The young lady frankly declared to him, that from the time ſhe left London ſhe had received the moſt cruel treatment from her mother in law; who not contented with the ſufferings ſhe could herſelf inflict, had frequently exaſperated her father ſo much againſt her, that ſhe had led a wretched life. The beginning of that ſummer, Lord ——— came into their neighbourhood on a viſit; he ſoon diſtinguiſhed her by his addreſſes, and, in the opportunities repeated viſits gave him, had prevailed with her to fly from all the miſeries inflicted on her, and commit herſelf to his protection. The manner of her flight was performed according to the plan they had agreed on; when in the middle of the execution I fruſtrated their ſcheme by my unlucky miſtake.

Lord Dorcheſter told me, that out of a juſt ſenſe of the duties a child owes to her parent, he endeavoured to perſuade her againſt ſo great a breach of

hers; adviſing her to go to her aunt, and aſſuring her of his moſt earneſt endeavours to prevail with her father to conſent to her living there.

His care was not unavailing: the young lady conſented; and he hired her a chariot, ſending one of his ſervants to eſcort her to London. All the ſatisfaction he received was from having reclaimed her from diſobedience; for ſhe was ſo ignorant of what was to become of her after ſhe got into Lord ———'s equipage (his ſervant being her guide) that ſhe could not give the leaſt account where I might be found.—However, after my Lord ſaw her ſet out towards London, he and his ſervants went forth on a fruitleſs ſearch, till night and deſpair of ſucceſs brough them back to the inn, with an intent of making a more exact ſearch the following day.

Accordingly they purſued their purpoſe the next morning as ſoon as day appeared; but having been equally unſucceſsful as the night before, he returned to the inn, ſtill in hopes I might be again brought thither. Reduced to this expectation as his only reſource, he was walking every way within ſight of the inn, in the extremeſt

tremeſt impatience, when his attention was awakened by the ſound of two vehicles from a croſs road. Probability was now unneceſſary; the ſmalleſt poſſibility is ſufficient to flatter our expectations in any thing we ardently deſire; my Lord's hopes were raiſed, and were not diſappointed, for it was our equipages which had given riſe to them.

CHAP. XVII.

AFTER I had performed my part in giving an account of all the conſequences of my error, and made ſome ſevere reflections on my inadvertence; Lord Dorcheſter, finding that the young lady's father and mother were in the inn, left me, in order to perform the promiſe he had given of trying the force of his eloquence on a mind too inſenſible to afford him any certainty of ſucceſs.

Above two hours paſſed in this conference, at the end of which he returned to me, and informed me that he had not only prevailed on the gentleman to for-

give his daughter's intentional diſobedience, in conſideration of her ſincere repentance, and to give her leave to remain with her aunt; but had even obtained the permiſſion under his hand, with a ſettlement on his daughter, while ſhe continued there, to put it out of his wife's power to make him recall his promiſe.

I have related this affair as it was then told me; but I ſhall now give your ladyſhip an exact account of ſome circumſtances, which were concealed from me till ſecrecy was of no longer uſe. What appeared plain enough to my undoubting ignorance, would ſeem obſcure to thoſe whoſe knowledge of the world leads them to ſee a deficiency in particulars.

This nobleman had not been long in the neighbourhood of this family, before he began to make his addreſſes to the young fugitive, and pretending to be unmarried, he feigned honourable views, inventing reaſons for concealing it from her father. He at laſt prevailed with her to make her eſcape from her parents, and fly to him; promiſing to ſanctify ſo raſh a ſtep by an immediate marriage.

Theſe

Theſe particulars ſhe related to Lord Dorcheſter, who acquainted her with the deceit pût upon her credulity; informing her, that the young nobleman was already married to a woman of rank equal to himſelf; but was too well known in the world for a debauched diſſolute man.

After ſuch a diſcovery, it was not difficult to convince her that his views were far different from what he pretended, and that marriage had been only made the lure to draw her into his power. As love had not extinguiſhed her ſenſe of virtue, little conſideration was requiſite to determine her to fly a man unworthy her confidence or eſteem. But ſhe durſt not return home; therefore could eaſier reſolve what courſe to avoid than what to take. In ſuch grief of mind, ſhe was incapable of thinking to any purpoſe; but Lord Dorcheſter's humanity led him to think for her, and, as I have ſaid, he prevailed with her to go to her aunt, from whoſe goodneſs he encouraged her to hope a pardon for an action rather raſh than criminal, to which ſhe had been driven by the ill treatment of her mother-in-law as much as ſhe had been en-

ticed by the man whom ſhe loved too well to ſuſpect.

As I had no notion a man could be guilty of ſo bad an action, I ſimply believed the ſtory as my Lord related it; who, chuſing rather to take advantage of my ignorance, than to place his hopes in corrupting the innocence of my mind, thought proper to conceal circumſtances which muſt lead me into reflections that could not fail to alarm me on account of my own ſituation.

I had been ſo harraſſed by the events of that and the preceding day, that my Lord would not attempt to proceed any farther till the next morning; by which time he hoped I might be a little refreſhed.

The remainder of our journey was performed with ſafety and quiet; nothing uncommon happening to us the reſt of the time. We arrived in London towards the cloſe of the evening, and I was obliged to borrowed light for the gay appearance of the multitude of ſhops with which it is filled, and, by being much illuminated, they received double luſtre. As all was new, all was remarkable to me; and at every thing we drove by "I

"wondered

" wondered with the fooliſh face of " praiſe." What then paſſed in my mind has convinced me that want of experience makes us as meer children at ſixteen as at ſix years old. Every gewgaw charmed me; every tawdry ſhop amazed me. I ſpoke only in exclamations; every look ſtared aſtoniſhment. The vivacity of my ſentiments made my folly the more conſpicuous; but it was at laſt curbed by obſerving how much my Lord was diverted with my behaviour. I wiſhed him all poſſible entertainment on any other ſubject; but my pride would not ſuffer me to continue the object of his mirth. With much difficulty, I endeavoured to conceal my emotions by ſilence; but I found that my eyes ſpoke them as ſtrongly as my words; and my Lord ſhewed me to how little purpoſe a perſon will pretend to act the hypocrite " whoſe thoughts are legible in the " eyes." He not only ſaw what my ſilence would have concealed, but the reaſon why I wiſhed to do it; and, to gratify my pride, ſaid all that could ſerve to convince me that " ignorance was no " reproach to thoſe who had not the " means of learning; all we received from

" nature was reaſon; this would give us " a ſenſe of virtue, and every valuable " ſentiment; but as to the manual ope- " rations of art, it would be ſtupidity " not to be ſtruck at the firſt ſight of " them." By ſuch arguments he made me no longer appear ſo little in my own eyes; I was again reſtored to my ſpeech, and forgave him the entertainment he took in it.

My eyes were ſo well amuſed, that I was ſorry when he ſtopped at the houſe which my Lord told me was my own. The rooms, after the ſpacious manſion I had left, appeared ſmall, but were elegant and pretty. And as I had regretted the loſs of the country ſcenes I had left behind, my Lord informed me, that as far as was in his power he had ſupplied the want of them, having choſen a houſe ſo ſituated, that the back rooms looked into St. James's park.

My Lord ſpent the evening with me, acquainting me with the number of my family, which conſiſted only of one maid beſides her I brought out of the country, and one footman.

As

As we entered the houſe I obſerved a kind of box, much ornamented, which attracted my notice, and excited my curioſity after the uſe of it; this I was informed was a ſedan chair; which, that nothing might be wanting to my convenience, had been beſpoke before I came to town. My Lord told me it was to be my equipage, and ſhewed me cloaths for the chairmen, in the ſame livery as my footman; which differed from his Lordſhip's; and being left in it to his own fancy, was the neateſt and genteeleſt livery I have ever ſeen.

When Lord Dorcheſter departed, being a good deal fatigued with the length of our journey, I went directly to bed, nor could all the novelty which had amuſed my mind keep me awake. But ſweet as my ſlumbers were, I could not long enjoy them: ſudden noiſes in the ſtreets awaked me in a terror: I imagined that a dead ſilence was the conſtant attendant on night; and having ſat in a room that looked into the park till I went to bed, I had not been undeceived in this particular. A moderate noiſe perhaps would have paſſed unheard by me, ſo ſoundly I ſlept; but ſome people engaged in a quarrel,

were ſo clamourous under my chamber windows, as muſt have rouſed even Somnus himſelf. My fright was ſo great, that I found myſelf at the window before I was ſenſible I had left my bed; the noiſe naturally drew me thither, in order to diſcover the occaſion of it: the crowd I beheld increaſed my fears to a height that rendered me motionleſs; but I was ſoon relieved by ſeeing them move down the ſtreet till they were loſt both to my ſight and hearing.

When the danger was paſt which I imagined had threatened me, I endeavoured to compoſe my ſpirits and return to my bed; but reſt was no longer to be found there; the hour was come for the return of all my gay neighbours to their houſes, which was proclaimed with a noiſe that could not fail of diſturbing the ſober part of the neighbourhood. The peculiarity of a footman's rap ſtartled me very much; I at firſt fancied ſome ſtrange diſaſterous diſtreſs muſt be the occaſion of ſo great a noiſe, but on more exact obſervation, and hearing exactly the ſame ſort of knocking at different doors, I began to diſcover an art in it

it ill ſuited to any ſuch cauſe. Having no notion of any other end in knocking at a door than to make one's ſelf heard, I could not ſuppoſe theſe flouriſhes were uſed for ſo plain and ſimple an intent; and at laſt convinced myſelf that it muſt be one of the pleaſures of a people whom I thought capricious enough to be capable of any thing that was ridiculous. This led me to ſome very ſevere reflections on the hearts of thoſe who could indulge themſelves in ſo fooliſh an amuſement, at a time of night when they muſt give great diſturbance to perſons who kept regular hours, and might prove very hurtful to the ſick. I then had recourſe to all my learning; and, with the ignorance of many cenſorious politicians, deſpiſed the legiſlature which admitted ſuch teizing follies; and by drawing compariſons between this neglect of order, and the accounts I had read of the governments of ſome other kingdoms, found, in the diſturbance of my reſt, good reaſon to quarrel with our conſtitution: many of thoſe who enveigh moſt ſtrongly againſt it, perhaps cannot aſſign a better. But as politics, though enlivened by anger

and

and cenſure, will, without oppoſition, become languid and dull, my wife and ſevere reflections grew compoſing, and I again fell into a ſweet ſlumber. Sleep now ſeemed inclined to treat me like a ſtranger, not with the careleſs dull manner of an old acquaintance, letting me be loſt in inſenſibility; but ſparing no endeavours for my entertainment, repreſented to me the cottage which had ſo long ſheltered my youth, gave me to my beloved aunt's embraces, whoſe joy was beyond utterance, and to be equalled only by my own; Lord Dorcheſter ſhewing by his ſmiles the pleaſure he received from our tranſports, and declaring himſelf rewarded by the ſatisfaction we enjoyed for the journey he had taken to reſtore me to her, begged leave to remain a conſtant ſpectator of our mutual affection. In this pleaſing deception was I entranced, only to be more afflicted by this unquiet town; for all the ſweet deluſion was at once put to flight by a rap at my door with a club, as if deſigning to break it open, accompanied with a hollow voice, which though loud was unintelligible to me.

I believe

I believe I was the more frighted for the quiet I had in imagination enjoyed; all I had hitherto felt was little to my preſent terror. I ran to my maid's room, which was next to mine, and by catching hold of her, awaked her. The fear impreſſed on my countenance, communicated itſelf to her mind; ſhe was little able to inſpire me with any courage, till I made her underſtand the cauſe of my fear, by deſiring her to liſten to the dreadful voice which had alarmed me, but was now gone paſt my houſe, and accompanying the forceable attacks the club was making on other doors. It was with difficulty that reſpect, aſſiſted with a little peeviſhneſs at being ſo unneceſſarily diſturbed, reſtrained her from laughing at my fears; but with all the civil gravity ſhe could aſſume, ſhe informed me of the nature of the grievance, and made me liſten to the words which had appeared unintelligible to me, till I underſtood enough to be convinced that they concerned only the hour of the night, and the weather. I had not been inclined to believe this on her word, ſuſpecting ſhe meant only to deceive me into a quiet ſtate of mind; and thought her invention very poor, if it could furniſh her

her with nothing better than ſo ridiculous a pretence, as that people ſhould pay money to be told the hour and the ſtate of the weather, which, if they were aſleep, could not be of any conſequence to them, and if they were awake they might learn with leſs clamour. My ears, and ſome better reaſons ſhe gave me for the inſtitution of watchmen, at laſt convinced me, and I left her to finiſh her night's reſt, but not to mend mine, for the repetition of the paſt noiſes, and the variety of new ones which ſucceeded them, ſoon overcame my hopes of ſleep, and I quitted all endeavours after it with my bed, ſpending the reſt of the night in reading and meditation.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

I HAD long been well acquainted with the firſt dawnings of day; but was now, for the firſt time, deprived of the ſight of the riſing ſun, when clouds did not conceal it from human eyes. It was an object that always delighted me; nor had I been accuſtomed to behold the morning light with heavy eye-lids and fatigued ſpirits, which want of ſleep now made me experience; but as the deſire of looking on a more agreeable ſcene than a narrow ſtreet, had led me into the dining-room, from whence I had the view of the park; wearineſs of body and mind tempted me to lie down on a ſopha, which made part of the furniture of the room; and here my ſituation being much quieter, I enjoyed a little reſt, which ſufficiently refreſhed me.

The ſight of a great town cannot but amuſe a girl bred in ſolitude: the concourſe of people in the ſtreets was a ſtrange appearance; all the world ſeemed abroad. I fancied the people were at once ſeized with an inability of ſitting ſtill. But tho' all

all I ſaw excited my wonder, yet it did not ſufficiently engage my attention to prevent my growing impatient for Lord Dorcheſter's company. I had long been accuſtomed to ſee him every hour; to paſs a whole day abſent from him was miſery. I watched at the window in painful expectation of his arrival, till evening robbed me of the power of diſtinguiſhing objects. In this uneaſy ſtate of mind I ſometimes feared ſome accident had befallen him, or that he was ſick; at others, I apprehended a ſtill greater evil, that the want of deſire, not the want of power to viſit me, occaſioned his long abſence. This thought brought me a relief from tears, that enabled me to combat the evils my imagination had raiſed; but before ſeven o'clock I had a better conſolation, for at laſt Lord Dorcheſter's coach ſtopped at my door.

My ſpirits were ſo much ſunk with the pains of impatience that I could not receive him with that joy in my countenance which the pleaſure he ſhewed in ſeeing me deſerved. He flew up ſtairs with ſuch rapidity, that there was not a moment's ſpace between the ſtopping of his

his coach at the door and his entering the dining room.

He approached me with inexpreſſible tenderneſs, complaining of the tedioufneſs of every minute of his abſence, and of the cruel circumſtances which had deprived him of a poſſibility of coming to me till then.

Having inſolence enough to be piqued at not ſeeing him earlier in the day, I replied, "that it muſt be almoſt impoſſible "to many people to deprive themſelves "of amuſements and good company, "without they had a ſtronger inducement "than a charitable deſire of relieving the "ſolitude and enlivening the mind of "one who could return them no enter-"tainment to recompence them for the "ſacrifice they made to their humanity; "and as I preferred his happineſs to my "own, I was glad he had not endeavoured "at ſo difficult a taſk." My eyes, I believe, expreſſed ſome reſentment; but they were not free from gathering tears, which ſhewed my grief was at leaſt equal to my anger. He, in return, reproached me for my inhumanity in giving him ſuch a reception. "Was the pleaſure," he ſaid, "which he had been longing for all day,

"turned

" turned into the mortification of finding " me offended with him for the moſt " cruel diſappointment he had ever expe- " rienced?" He proteſted that " he had " never ſo ardently wiſhed for my com- " pany; and was incapable of receiving " pleaſure from any thing elſe." He then related the vexatious circumſtances by which he had been prevented from coming ſooner, gave me ſuch ſtrong aſſurances of his affection by words, and ſo much ſtronger ſtill in the ſilent language of his eyes, that I could not reſiſt ſuch teſtimony: the moſt obſtinate incredulity could not ſtand before the tenderneſs ſo viſible in his expreſſive countenance.

The perverſe temper in which Lord Dorcheſter had found me, ſerved the more to recommend the good humour that ſucceeded it; for want of a little interruption it had begun to appear an habitual eaſineſs; and that, though always convenient, muſt ceaſe to be meritorious when it is diſcovered to be involuntary. Beſides, my peeviſhneſs ſhewed him as well as myſelf, how neceſſary his company was to my happineſs; a circumſtance that could not but be agreeable to him, and could not be painful to me while every wiſh was grati-

gratified by his preſence; and the charms of his converſation left no room for reflection.

We both complained of having been ſo long ſeparated; and the joy we ſhewed in each other's company proved that neither had exaggerated in the deſcription of what each had ſuffered for want of it: conſcious of no motive that required concealment, and ignorant of the cuſtoms of the world, I ſaw no reaſon for expatiating leſs upon my uneaſineſs on that ſubject than on any other. I knew not that the world would have allowed me to have grieved for the loſs of a parrot, to have been wretched at miſſing a maſquerade, miſerable at being deprived of the ſight of a new opera, or diſtreſſed to the laſt degree at being diſappointed of the principal part of the company at an approaching drum; but would never have forgiven me for declaring my regret for the loſs of the moſt agreeable companion that ſociety could afford me, if that companion happened not to be of my own ſex. I by no means apprehended, that to declare I was pleaſed with the converſation, and touched with the affection

of

of one tenderly attached to me, was an offence to decency, if the perſon did not wear the ſame ſort of dreſs as myſelf. What my heart innocently felt, I thought my tongue might unreproachably utter; and accordingly, in the fulneſs of my heart, ſpoke as frankly as my Lord, and with all the eloquent warmth of truth, deſcribing the painful ſenſations and melancholy reflections to which his abſence had given riſe, as well as the ſatisfaction in their being at an end, which recompenced me for all the paſt ſufferings. Bleſſings, by long poſſeſſion grow ſo familiar, that we at laſt become inſenſible of their worth, though they influence our whole lives, and conſtitute our felicity. We ſcarcely reflect on the uſe of the ſun, unleſs ſome withering plantation, that has been deprived of his kindly rays, reminds us how neceſſary he is to all exiſtence.

We knew not how to part again, ſince when once aſunder it was in the power of perverſe circumſtances to keep us ſo; and much of the night was ſpent before Lord Dorcheſter could prevail on himſelf to leave me.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

I HAD not been many days in London before Lord Dorcheſter deſired I would permit him to introduce me to Lady Paleſtine, a relation of his, whoſe houſe was the rendezvous of all the polite people in town, and where he aſſured me I ſhould be well entertained.

The vivacity of my temper made me incline to novelty and amuſement, therefore I readily acquieſced. A day was fixed, and I was dreſſed with the utmoſt elegance, and at no inconſiderable expence. As faſhion, not fancy, was to be my guide, I left the care of adorning my perſon to my maid, who exauſted her art; and I dare ſay I ſhould have beheld the effects of her labours with ſome complacency, had I not been apprehenſive of being gazed at for the uncommonneſs of my education; an impertinence by which I had ſufficiently ſuffered on my firſt arrival at Lord Dorcheſter's; and indeed, in my road to it theſe fears made me more diſpoſed to find faults than beauties in my perſon. But my vanity taking alarm at this

this ſudden fit of humility, brought Lord Dorcheſter to its aid, who ſo ſtrengthened its party, that I promiſed with pretty good courage to follow him to Lady Paleſtine's, where he was to go before in order to be in readineſs to introduce me.

Nothing had ſo much contributed to make me eaſy as his Lordſhip's aſſurances that no one but Lady Paleſtine knew any thing of me, nor would ever learn from her more than that I was a young woman to whom he was guardian; and therefore I had no reaſon to apprehend any obſervation but what my perſon excited; and he aſſured me that my dreſs and air were ſo conformable to thoſe of the reſt of the world, that there was no room to ſuſpect I had ever been ſecluded from it.

My Lord did not explain to me what was generally underſtood by the word guardian; but mentioning it as a common thing, had I conceived any doubts about the propriety of my ſituation, he would thereby have removed them: but I was far from imagining that being under the care of a gentleman, however young and agreeable he might be, was any indecorum. I did not ſuſpect any one of inclining

clining to a vice, of whoſe exiſtence I was totally ignorant; and if I had been in that particular better informed, I ſhould have thought nothing ſo great a ſecurity as being under a man's peculiar care and protection. Some knowledge of the world was neceſſary to make me believe any one could wiſh to injure another; long experience only convinced me that a man could think of injuring one whom he was bound by every tye of real honour and humanity to defend; nor could leſs have taught me that men who act with the ſtricteſt integrity to their own ſex, ſhould imagine themſelves leſs obliged to do ſo by ours, when they acknowledged that Nature, by giving us greater gentleneſs of mind, and more delicacy of body, makes us dependant on them; which cuſtom has, through policy, not only confirmed but increaſed.

But it is time to end reflections, which will be thought the dregs of my recluſe education, and deſpiſed as vulgar and puritannical by the free and polite world, who are above ſuch low reſtraints as I may be willing to recommend; I ſhall therefore proceed with my ſtory.

With

With ſome palpitation of heart, I went to Lady Paleſtine: I knew ſhe was to have company; and the expectation of ſeeing, perhaps, a dozen of people together, diſcompoſed that aukward baſhfulneſs which was the conſequence of the ſolitude I had lived in; but the flutter of my ſpirits was turned into a real terror on the ſervants throwing open the door of the firſt room, which expoſed to my view ſuch a concourſe of people as I had never ſeen, nor aſſembled together in imagination. I turned my back upon them; and fear being given as the beſt defence to the weaker part of the creation, was determined to run down ſtairs as faſt as I could; but Lord Dorcheſter, who waited juſt by the door, though in my fright I had overlooked him, caught hold of my hand, and then endeavoured to ſtop me by giving me courage to encounter the eyes of ſo large a company: he laviſhed upon me that beſt cordial to drooping vanity, flattery, and undertook to perſuade me to endure to be looked at, by aſſuring me that "I "muſt be the object of the admiration "of every one who beheld me; and that "if I found myſelf more gazed at than "the reſt of the company, I might be

"certain

" certain it was from being more admired." This argument has reconciled many women to univerſal obſervation; but with one educated as I had been, baſhfulneſs muſt be proof againſt it; however, he urged one motive that inſpired me with courage to follow him up the room, which was ſhewing me how much I ſhould oblige him by doing ſo. To give him pleaſure I could have performed more dangerous adventures, tho' the paſſing thro' ſuch multitudes appeared very tremendous.

When Lady Paleſtine ſaw me, ſhe came towards us, and received me in the moſt obliging manner; ſpoke in the higheſt ſtrain in praiſe of my perſon, and thanked my Lord for giving her the pleaſure of my acquaintance. This flow of politeneſs I received aukwardly enough; I was at that time, by confuſion, rendered as incapable as I was unqualified by nature for returning ſuch compliments; expreſſions of good-will, that I knew were dictated by truth, my heart could acknowledge, and therefore my tongue could repay, but her ladyſhip ſoared above my humble conceptions.

As the largeneſs of the aſſembly made the ſphere of Lady Paleſtine's care and attention very extenſive, ſhe could not devote any great portion of her time to one perſon; therefore I had ſufficient leiſure to indulge my curioſity by obſerving the company; for tho' my Lord did not go to any great diſtance from me, yet he was ſo engaged in converſation with all the people around him, that he did not interrupt my obſervations. There was ſomething ſo affectionate in the addreſs of moſt of the company to each other, that I was happy to find the people among whom fortune had thrown me were ſo inclined to friendſhip. I conceived a very favourable impreſſion of the whole ſociety, but was particularly pleaſed with one lady, for her lively and affectionate expreſſions of joy at meeting with another; and found myſelf ſo attracted by the amiable diſpoſition I thought I diſcovered in her, that when ſhe left that dear friend, I could not forbear following her to the next: but how was I ſurprized to hear her, after practiſing the ſame addreſs, complain of the penance ſhe had undergone, in being obliged to ſuffer, for a whole quarter of an hour, the converſation of the

lady

lady ſhe had left with all the tokens of regret. A ſecret horror at ſuch falſhood took place of my beginning attachment, and I flew from her as from a wild beaſt; I believe too with a like terror in my countenance; for Lord Dorcheſter, whoſe eyes were always upon me, enquired the cauſe. The manner in which I related it ſhewed how much it affected me, and I was amazed to ſee him ſmile at it. I could not forbear aſking him "why he choſe "to aſſociate me with ſo vile a ſet of peo-"ple; for ſurely they would ſcruple no "crime who could unneceſſarily be guil-"ty of ſuch flagrant falſhoods." Nor was I better contented when he told me theſe were expreſſions uſed by every one, but believed by no body; meer words of courſe. This made no difference in my opinion, but by giving me reaſon to add the charge of abſurdity, in thus directing the only end of ſpeech to the crime of inſincerity; it ſeemed to me a method of ranking ourſelves with the dumb part of the creation, in ſpite of nature; all the diſtinction was, that thoſe nature made ſo, could not pronounce words, and the others rendered themſelves ſo by uttering no meaning. I could not poſſibly allow

that the obligation of joining in ſociety required any more of us, than to bury our diſlikes in ſilence; to conceal a truth, which, if known, may hurt, and can be of no ſervice, may be a duty, but to pretend an affection we do not feel, I eſteemed criminal; and to expreſs what we know will not, and what we did not intend ſhould be believed, appeared to me an exceſſive folly. The diſguſt this little incident gave me, made me attend leſs to the converſation, and conſequently more to the perſons of the company; a change that was not at all to my eaſe; for I now found I had every one's eyes upon me; where-ever I placed myſelf I was the principal object; to move was to little purpoſe; the eyes might be different, but they were ſtill alike fixed on me. The gentlemen were more particularly troubleſome in this reſpect: if I ſat down in hopes of hiding myſelf, it only drew them nearer, leſt any one ſhould ſcreen me from their ſight. My uneaſineſs was viſible in my countenance; for I heard one gentleman ſay to three or four others, "come "away, it is cruel to put any one ſo much "out of countenance." "That may be," anſwered another, "but it would be more

"cruel

" cruel to myſelf to comply with a baſh-
" fulneſs that adorns her."

All the flattery with which Lord Dorcheſter had endeavoured to arm me againſt the effects of ſuch general obſervations, had now no longer power over my mind; I could not perſuade myſelf that I attracted the notice of the company by any thing but a ſtrangeneſs in my air and manner; and I was the more convinced of it by the contemptuous glances of many young ladies.

My Lord had informed me, that ſome ill-natured and ſome ill-judging people would deſpiſe others for their unavoidable ignorance of the follies of the world, tho' the knowledge of them could have no good tendency. Theſe ſigns of undeſerved contempt gave me no favourable impreſſion of the ladies; yet I liked them better than the reſt of the company: they looked leſs pleaſed indeed, but then they looked leſs at me, and that fully recompenced me for their ſcorn.

I at laſt got Lord Dorcheſter to approve my going home, and he immediately followed me, but found me ſo much humbled that I was quite dull. To cure me of my humility was therefore much his in-

tereſt; and he laboured hard to perſuade me into the belief he had before tried to inſpire; and to convince me, deſired I would another time obſerve the difference between my complexion and thoſe of the reſt of the ladies. I was not ſo humble as to have overlooked that circumſtance; I had perceived a great deadneſs in the beſt complexions in the room; and as I did not ſuppoſe there could be any thing very particular in mine, fancied it a ſtrange effect of the light, till various opportunities ſhewed me the contrary. This advantage I could never attribute to any thing but having always kept ſuch early hours as nature ſeems to have deſigned, having lived continually in the air, tho' not much expoſed to the ſun, and on ſo very ſpare a diet, as by giving me the pureſt blood imaginable, might communicate an extraordinary clearneſs to my ſkin.

I ſoon forgot the uneaſineſs I had undergone; Lord Dorcheſter's converſation baniſhed every painful thought; and the pleaſure he ſeemed to have received from my appearance, recompenced me for what I had ſuffered for it.

Lady Paleſtine returned my viſit the next morning; and invited Lord Dorcheſter and myſelf

myſelf to dine with her the day following, without any other company. She was ſo eaſy in her converſation, and courted my acquaintance ſo politely, that, in a few days, we became what the world calls intimate; that is, we ſaw each other often, and converſed with freedom and chearfulneſs. I found no inclination to a real attachment to her; ſhe was rather amuſing than engaging; ſhe had a good deal of wit, but diſſipation had robbed her of her judgment. She was the life of a circle, but a dull companion *tête a tête*; and, as if ſhe was ſenſible of this, ſhe avoided them as much as poſſible, and delighted in a crowd. Her greateſt happineſs was a general acquaintance; a bleſſing to which ſhe had attained.

CHAP. XX.

YOUR ladyſhip perhaps begins to wonder that Lord Dorcheſter, with the views which you will ſuppoſe he had, would introduce me to a woman of faſhion, where I might gain a knowledge of the world; which, if it did not corrupt me, might fruſtrate his deſigns by diſcovering them to me. That I may not leave this improbability on your mind till the courſe of my narration clears it up, I will venture the diſcovery, and inform you now, of what I long remained ignorant: for the manner in which I at laſt came by the knowledge, you muſt wait till the courſe of my ſtory leads me to it.

Lady Paleſtine, I have already ſaid, was a woman of wit, and of conſiderable rank; but her fortune was by no means equal to her ſplendid way of life. At fifteen ſhe was married to an old man, who, as he did not gain her affections, could not greatly influence the conduct of a woman who had been better inſtructed in politeneſs

politeneſs than in prudence. Lord Paleſtine's fondneſs made her miſtreſs of herſelf from the day of her marriage.

The natural vivacity of her temper, and the diſlike to a companion of an age ſo ill ſuited to her own, led her into all the diſſipations which the gay world affords: her beauty, with the other favourable circumſtances of her ſituation, attracted the other ſex; no woman had more admirers; naturally vain and lively, all received encouragement, and few who ſtrongly attached themſelves to her could complain of her cruelty; however, as my Lord was pleaſed, the world was too obliging to take offence. The good-natured, in ſilence pitied her errors; the cenſorious, expecting a ſpeedy rupture from her bad conduct, did not think mere anticipation worthy the attention of perſons accuſtomed to the more ingenious exerciſe of invention; and as the conſequences they expected from her irregularity made her leſs the object of their envy than women of a leſs blameable behaviour, they thought her an unworthy ſubject of diſcourſe, and neglected her. Every one indeed called her imprudent, but were not the leſs deſirous of her acquaintance,

ſince ſhe gave entertainments, had great drums, and every kind of diverſion at her houſe. Aſtrea, with all her virtue, were ſhe now to come upon earth, could not attract ſuch multitudes as a card table. People cenſure the pleaſures only of thoſe who will not impart to others the means of being pleaſed. If a woman has aſſurance enough not to be aſhamed of infamy, and a fortune to afford every faſhionable expence, the world may blame her ill conduct, but it will not deſert her; while they cenſure her behaviour they will court her acquaintance. I have learnt, that nothing is a crime in polite circles but poverty and prudence. A perſon who cannot contribute to the follies of others, may perhaps be pardoned if ſhe only complies with them; but if ſhe attempts to be rational, ſhe muſt not hope for forgiveneſs.

It is ſuppoſed that Lord Paleſtine at laſt grew leſs infatuated than he had been; for at his death, which happened when his lady was about twenty-five years of age, he left her little more than her jointure of 600l. per annum, and his London houſe, furniture, and jewels. This appeared to a woman of her Ladyſhip's ſpirit,

ſpirit, a poor deſpicable pittance; it would have obliged her to have leſſened her pleaſures; and if ſhe had a proper ſenſe of the conſequences of retrenching, it muſt be allowed a ſerious conſideration, ſince the ſplendor in which ſhe had hitherto lived had been the only means of preſerving her from contempt and neglect.

She could find but one reſource againſt the evils that threatened her: as ſhe was young, and in high reputation for her wit and beauty, ſhe thought it not impoſſible for once to reconcile pleaſure and intereſt, and accordingly made thoſe for whom ſhe relinquiſhed the eſteem of mankind, give her the means of purchaſing their civility and outward reſpect. She was too engaging to fail of ſucceſs in this point: her wit and politeneſs for a long time excuſed the decay of her beauty; and ſupplying by art the depredations of time, ſhe was not deſtitute of admirers even when I was introduced to her acquaintance, though ſhe was then above fifty years old; faſhion was a charm of which age had not robbed her, and continued to attract many years after I knew her. But as this was not quite ſo

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univerſal a magnet as youth and beauty, ſhe found the effects in a diminution of lovers, and therefore was not averſe to receiving advantage from the love of which ſhe was not the object.

Lord Dorcheſter had been one of her train, more from faſhion and indolence than from inclination; and as he knew money had no more charms for her than love, he made little ſcruple of acquainting her with his paſſion for me, and of the means he intended to purſue. He wiſhed to have me introduced into the world, as he thought it might both improve and amuſe me; he knew not how to do this without running a hazard of my learning more of it than was conſiſtent with his ſcheme, but by the means of ſome body who could concur with him in the execution, and yet was on ſuch a footing in the world that her acquaintance would not place me in a bad light; for his Lordſhip did not chuſe that any perſon ſhould have reaſon to think ill of me but himſelf. No one could be ſo proper for this purpoſe as Lady Paleſtine. She knew my Lord's generoſity too well to decline the office, and complied with the

the plan he directed, though ſhe diſapproved it.

She told Lord Dorcheſter, that "in "her opinion he would be more certain "of ſucceſs by making me acquainted "with all the cuſtoms of mankind; by "treating *vulgar prejudices* as they de-"ſerved; and ſhewing me how much "more happy they were who ſet themſelves above ſuch a *low way of thinking*, "than thoſe *narrow minded people* who "were governed by them." She offered "to aſſiſt him in this manner, which ſhe "eſteemed much the beſt." But his Lordſhip differed in opinion. He replied, "that what ſhe ſaid might be true, had I "been educated in as great ignorance of "vice and virtue as of the cuſtoms of "mankind; but that, on the contrary, I "was as much better acquainted with the "one, as I was leſs ſo with the other, "than thoſe who are bred in the world. "That he was convinced I ſhould deteſt "him, was I to perceive his principles "were leſs pure than my own; whereas "he now had reaſon to believe he had "made ſome impreſſion on my heart; "and that as I was free from ſuſpicion, "he could not but ſuppoſe he ſhould find

"oppor-

" opportunities from my innocence and " love which he might improve; and that " all the effects he wiſhed from intro- " ducing me into the world, was, the " diſſipating my thoughts, leſt too much " reflection might teach me ſome guard " againſt him."

Lady Paleſtine had ſo great a ſenſe of female frailty, ſhe could not think Lord Dorcheſter's ſcheme abſolutely impracticable, and readily agreed to obey his commands; though an intimacy with me was not very deſirable, as it could not be cultivated in a crowd. A gay party at ſupper was her greateſt pleaſure; but in them I might have ſeen more of the world than was thought adviſable; eſpecially as converſation was apt to take a free turn at her Ladyſhip's houſe. However ſhe ſacrificed a few hours to my Lord and me, excluding others. At her largeſt aſſemblies I was judged ſafe enough: for tho' I there fell into converſation with many people, eſpecially the gentlemen, for they were moſt watchful for opportunities of ſpeaking to me, and I was not more reſerved to them than to my own ſex, yet decorum ſecured me from the freedom of converſation to which her Ladyſhip admitted

mitted them. She was likewiſe graciouſly pleaſed to carry me to public places.

The firſt I appeared at was a play. No one was admitted into the box to us but Lord Dorcheſter, who excluded all others, that I might not confine the emotions ſo new a ſight would raiſe in me. My Lord had often read to me ſome of Shakeſpear's hiſtorical plays, and it was to one of theſe he carried me, never chuſing I ſhould go to any others; and he gave me ſo poor a character of the performances of many of the other dramatic poets, that I never felt a deſire of ſeeing them, though by the play-bills I found there was great variety.

Had my Lord's only view been my entertainment, in this he would have acted judiciouſly; I have been convinced by obſervation that plays and novels vitiate the taſte: I allow many of them to be extremely diverting, ſome very fine; but by the multiplicity of events, mixed with a good deal of the marvellous, they learn the mind a diſſipation even in reading. The ſimple chain of facts in hiſtory, appear ill to a perſon uſed to wonder; as moral truths and ſound reaſon do to one who has been accuſtomed to the turns and quibbles of falſe wit, the enchanting jingle

gle of rhime, or the pompous ſound of high-flown metaphors.

Not that I would exclude the reading of ſuch authors as I mention. I am not inſenſible to the charms of poetry; perhaps was I more ſo I might not think it ſo unfit for young people. But I look upon it as dangerous, before maturity has fixed ſome degree of taſte, ſome ſteadineſs of thought and principle, as it is apt to render them ever after uninclined to ſuch ſtudies as are uſeful, and of more laſting entertainment. In ſhort, I eſteem ſuch reading as bad for the mind as high meats are for the ſtomach; they may create a falſe appetite, but will pall a true one, and make all proper food appear inſipid, till by long uſe even they grow tireſome, and the true appetite being vitiated, all alike diſguſt.

The very little I heard of ſuch performances pleaſed me for the time; but being ſeldom, and of ſhort duration, they did not dwell enough on my mind to lead me into any compariſon between the entertainment they afforded me and what I received from my common ſtudies; they amuſed without diſſipating: Lord Dorcheſter diſpenſed them as a cordial to my ſpirits,

ſpirits, when he perceived them inclined to ſuffer from the melancholy reflections which would occur too frequently, as my aunt could not be long out of my thoughts. However, greatly as I had been entertained by the plays I had heard, there was ſomething ſo much more lively in the repreſentation of them on the theatre, as at firſt delighted me extremely. I had heard many of the ſpeeches much more to advantage when my Lord read them; but in the acting the whole received ſuch an air of truth, that I could ſcarcely diſbelieve a fact in it. This made my agitations almoſt as ſtrange as if I had been the ſpectator of a real tragedy. The play was Macbeth, and Lord Dorcheſter and Lady Paleſtine were ſufficiently taken up in obſerving the paſſions impreſſed on my countenance. They told me I might more properly be ſaid to act the play, than ſome of the perſons on the ſtage. Indeed I believe I was more fatigued with my part of the repreſentation; for when it was over, I found my mind quite weary with the agitation it had been in. Anger was one of the paſſions that had been excited; for I could not bear with patience

the

the noiſes that were ſometimes made; and was ſo intirely engaged that I could not utter a rational ſentence on any other ſubject, even between the acts: nor did the change of ſcene change my ideas; for after I went home they conninued as much fixed on the play as during the repreſentation; and it was almoſt with difficulty they at laſt gave place to ſleep.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXI.

LADY Paleſtine invited me the next day to a private party of a few friends. I would modeſtly have declined the invitation; for not being a general friend to the company, I felt myſelf unworthy of a place among them, and expreſſed a fear of being a troubleſome reſtraint on their converſation. She ſmiled at this notion, but inſiſted on my coming. I could not help anticipating, in my imagination, the pleaſure I ſhould receive from the variety of converſation ſo noble and extenſive a union muſt afford, where each perſon could venture to declare every thought, and give vent even to their follies. For I had been taught by my Lord the neceſſity of being guarded in what we ſay before any but moſt intimate friends, and to this I attributed the extreme trifling-neſs of all the converſation at which I had been preſent.

I went to Lady Paleſtine's at the appointed time; and though there were fewer people than I had ever ſeen when ſhe admitted company, yet I was inclined

to

to envy her ſo many ſelect friends, for there was about twenty in number.

My expectation being raiſed, I was all attention; but, to my great ſurprize, the converſation extended no farther than the weather; and their engagements, during the interval between their arrival and their being properly diſpoſed to their ſeparate tables; for I then learnt, that even in *friendly* ſocieties cards were a neceſſary ingredient.

Not doubting but converſation would ſhare their time, I by turns attended every table, but found that the game was the only topic. One held the *cruelleſt* cards, another the *pleaſanteſt* hand: thoſe who won moſt part of the night, no ſooner ſeemed to be threatened with a reverſe of fortune, than they declared "there was no "playing againſt Lady ſuch a one, ſhe "always won." Another equally unſucceſsful added, "*ſome people* had ſtrange "good luck; for her part, ſhe found her "cards would ſometimes be bad, but *ſome* "*people* could make them win, whether "they were bad or good." The winners enjoyed their good fortune in ſilence, or told you how much they had loſt the night before. When it grew late, this

ſelect

ſelect ſociety broke up; and ſhewing that cards, not friendſhip, had drawn them together, withdrew as ſoon as they aroſe from the table; ſome exulting with the reflection of having won their friends' money, others out of humour at having loſt their own; but none, I believe, ſo diſappointed as myſelf, who had imagined a far different entertainment; not having then learnt, that a party which does not, by its numbers, deſerve to be honoured with the name of a drum, is entitled a private party of a few friends; I ſuppoſe by way of expreſſing its *inſignificance*.

As I frequently met the ſame company at Lady Paleſtine's, I ſoon became acquainted with many of them, eſpecially of the other ſex, none of whom pleaſed me ſo well as Sir Charles Liſdale. His perſon had no particular charms; he was genteel, and looked like a man of faſhion, otherwiſe plain enough; but he was extremely lively, had a great deal of wit and politeneſs, and ſhewed a particular regard for me, by great attention, reſpect, and a conſtant attendance; for he followed me about like my ſhadow, and when I was preſent appeared inſenſible to every

every perſon in company; his eyes ſeemed only given him to look at me, and his ears to hear no words but what I uttered; his whole converſation was directed to me.

Ought I to be aſhamed of owning that I was pleaſed with Sir Charles's behaviour? Does it ſhew a ſpirit of coquetry to like to be approved? Surely not. I thought not of love, nor conſidered him as a lover; but my baſhfulneſs found great relief from perceiving him well diſpoſed to be pleaſed with what I ſaid: his partiality made me leſs careful in weighing my words, and this eaſe rendered his converſation particularly agreeable to me. There is great ſatisfaction in having the liberty of talking nonſenſe, without incurring the contempt of our hearers; and perhaps people never appear to more advantage than when they dare give the reins to their imagination and vivacity and leave to others the care of being wiſe.

Another merit in Sir Charles Liſdale was, that he did not ſurfeit me with compliments, and when he made me any, there was always an elegance and variety in them; a circumſtance, of which the converſation

converſation of many of his ſex could not boaſt. Their fulſome flattery diſguſted me; I could not liſten to people who had foreſworn all truth. Beſides, my pride was offended in their ſuppoſing me ſo weak as to believe what they ſaid, and endeavouring to render themſelves agreeable by addreſſing my vanity inſtead of my reaſon, till I obſerved that they treated others a good deal in the ſame manner; for that they did not talk in quite ſo high a ſtrain to them, I imagined was from expecting leſs credulity in perſons of more mature years, and not ſo new to the world, as they muſt perceive I was. But Sir Charles taught me to divert myſelf with theſe ridiculous compliments; and after a time I began to find amuſement in their folly.

I had one or two danglers, who were well ſtricken in years, and afforded me more entertainment than any; they deified me with ſo much nonſenſe and bombaſt, that I ſometimes could ſcarcely underſtand them; and they would beg for a ſmile ſo much like a ſtreet beggar for an alms, that my generoſity generally exceeded their demands, for I was terribly apt to give them an ungrateful laugh inſtead of a gracious

a gracious ſimper, which diſcompoſed their tempers ſtill more than my features, and excited a reſentment that was not ſoon cooled. However, whether languiſhing or angry, theſe antient gentlemen were leſs diſagreeable to me than many young ones, whoſe ſelf-ſatisfied air was more odious than their nonſenſe. They ſeemed ſo ſure of pleaſing, that they could not but offend. We cannot well endure people who demand our approbation as their due, and look as if they would bully us into a liking. A lover, who would ſucceed, ſhould not behave like a highwayman, and attempt to obtain our hearts, as he would our purſes, by only crying, deliver. They ſhould conſider, that as all the fire of aſſurance they can put into their eyes will not make them ſo dangerous as a piſtol, they may with leſs hazard be reſiſted. They ſhould at leaſt accept our hearts as a favour; there is a pleaſure in obliging, which makes us love thoſe who give us an opportunity of exerting that power.

I could perceive that Lord Dorcheſter and Sir Charles Liſdale did not greatly like each other. Sir Charles, I imagined, might be actuated by envy, which I found

found was a common vice in this country. It ſeemed ſtrange to me, that any one ſhould envy when they might imitate, and thereby not only remove the ſuperiority that renders them uneaſy, but love the other whoſe example led them into ſo happy a path. No perſon afflicted with an envious diſpoſition can be ever happy; our connexions with others make us ſuffer by their ill qualities; how unfortunate muſt we then be if we feel pain from their good ones.

Lord Dorcheſter was ſo ſuperior to Sir Charles, that I could not ſuſpect him of the ſame vice; nor indeed did I believe him capable of it, could he have met with one ſuperior to himſelf. But the laſt reaſon I ſhould have aſſigned for his diſlike was jealouſy; and therefore as I had ſuppoſed he had conceived ſome unjuſt prejudice, I laboured to remove it by giving Sir Charles the praiſes I thought his due, and wondered that the more I ſpoke in his favour the more averſe my Lord ſeemed to him. This was very unlike his uſual politeneſs, which led him to ſee charms in every thing I approved. As he gave me no reaſon for his averſion, I was ſometimes almoſt angry, and

could not forbear telling him he was very unjuſt.

I found that I ſhould have liked Sir Charles ſtill better if my Lord's taſte had concurred with mine. I could not but think mine was bad, ſince his would not give a ſanction to it; and if Sir Charles had not been too aſſiduous to leave it in my power, I believe I ſhould have declined his acquaintance; ſo much leſs agreeable was it rendered by my Lord's diſapprobation. But this could not be done without incivility to Sir Charles; and not imagining it gave my Lord any uneaſineſs, I continued to converſe with him, which I could not do without great pleaſure to myſelf.

My Lord, at laſt, grew thoughtful and melancholy; he ſaw me ſeldomer, and often when he was with me would be ſilent, or converſe with little connection or chearfulneſs. If I expreſſed an uneaſineſs at a change of temper, which I attributed to ſickneſs, he would make anſwer, "that I could not poſſibly be "concerned about him; but as he had "no merit but love to engage my heart, "he could not complain if I did not "give him what he had no good title "to."

" to." If I exerted all the eloquence of tenderneſs to aſſure him of my affection, and of my anxiety for his health, he would ſometimes appear revived, and tell me, that " if I really had any re-" gard for him, he was well and happy." He would, perhaps, appear chearful for ſome hours after; but if he left me in that happier ſtate of mind, when we next met the air of melancholy would be returned.

CHAP. XXII.

WHILE Lord Dorcheſter, and conſequently his Ophelia, continued in this ſtate of uneaſineſs, Lady Paleſtine deſired me to go with her to an opera. As home became leſs agreeable, diſſipation grew more ſo, and I accepted her invitation with pleaſure. I had a good ear for muſick; and my Lord had given me the beſt maſters to improve it, though I had not yet made any great proficiency, except in ſinging; for in that branch I had leſs to learn, nature having given me a voice, that your ladyſhip (as well as many others, whom I muſt have allowed excellent judges, even if they had not flattered me) has often ſaid, did not require the help of art. As I was qualified to be entertained, it is not ſtrange that I was ſo at a time when operas were in their higheſt perfection. Faſhion had no occaſion to aſſiſt the muſic towards delighting me; but as I was a ſtranger to affectation, extacies were not the conſequences of my being exceſſively pleaſed, and, therefore, I did not underſtand them in others.

My

My attention was interrupted by ſeeing a lady who ſat next me in a moſt languiſhing condition; I thought her at her laſt gaſp, and did not doubt but ſhe was going into a fainting fit. The houſe being extremely full, was very hot; to this I attributed her diſorder, in which ſhe ſeemed to have many companions; but as ſhe appeared in the greateſt extremity, ſhe was the propereſt object of my care. Accordingly, in a flutter of haſte I applied my ſmelling-bottle to her noſe, fearing the leaſt delay might find her paſt recovery. The bottle was filled with very ſtrong ſalts, and I was rejoiced to ſee their ſpeedy effect; for ſhe recovered in an inſtant, and opened her eyes with a great ſtart, and a look of amazement, which might be expected from their ſudden operation. But I was extremely ſurprized, that inſtead of thanking me for my care and compaſſion, ſhe looked exceſſively angry, and, in a moſt uncivil manner and harſh voice, aſked me, what I meant by ſuch impertinence? ſhe then gave vent to her rage in ſuch a torrent of words, as raiſed my opinion of my ſalts, for having ſo immediately given ſuch great ſtrength of ſpirits to one before expiring,

though the effect was not very agreeable; for ſhe did not leave me a poſſibility of explaining my good intention, nor ſhould I have had time to recover my ſurprize, if the ſalts had not taken a new turn, throwing her into a violent fit of ſneezing, which made very unlucky breaks in her diſcourſe, and thereby increaſed her anger. But "muſic has charms to ſooth a ſavage breaſt," as I found, for her favourite ſinger coming on the ſtage, her wrath ſubſided; and inſtead of the words, impertinent, inſolent, &c. &c. ſhe could utter none but oh the charmer! the dear creature! raviſhing! enchanting! and all that our language affords to the ſame purpoſe, with a mixture of *caro, cariſſimo!* Her reſentment was now buried in admiration, and all her ſenſes abſorbed by that of hearing.

While ſhe was thus engaged, Sir Charles informed me, that extacy of pleaſure, not extremity of pain, occaſioned all thoſe languiſhments which had excited my compaſſion, and that her anger aroſe from my having interrupted her raptures, and, as ſhe ſuſpected, ridiculed them by that action. I think my ignorance never raiſed ſo many bluſhes in me as on this occaſion;

occaſion; I was really overcome with ſhame at my miſtake, till I reflected that ſhe had moſt reaſon to be ſo, ſince her behaviour was fooliſh affectation, mine only the effect of reaſonable compaſſion.

This incident, however, greatly interrupted the pleaſure I ſhould have received from the entertainment; and another, not leſs mortifying, was, that I did not ſee Lord Dorcheſter the whole evening, till at my return home. I then found he had been at the opera likewiſe, and could not forbear reproaching him for not being of our party, eſpecially as he once found a pleaſure in going with me to every place. His anſwer was, that "he thought "me too well engaged to have afforded "him any of my converſation, had he "attempted to come to us; and that "it would not have been eaſy to have "approached me, I was ſo encircled with "gentlemen."

I replied, that "this was a poor ex-"cuſe to hide his want of inclination; "for he muſt know, I would be en-"gaged in no other converſation when "I had the power of enjoying his; and "that a crowd muſt be great indeed

" that did not leave one a poſſibility " of making room for a perſon whom " we eſteemed far above that whole " crowd." All the anſwer I obtained was ſo broken with ſighs, ſo unconnected in itſelf, and ſpoken with ſuch an air of dejection, as touched me to the heart, though it did not ſpeak intelligibly enough for me to underſtand the occaſion of it.

In pity to his melancholy, I endeavoured to hide the effect it had on me, and tried every art to amuſe him; I ſang to him; I read to him; I attempted to lead him into converſation; but all to no purpoſe; when he looked moſt pleaſed with me, he ſeemed moſt oppreſſed; his ſpirits were too much ſunk to bear the tenderneſs of his mind without an increaſe of dejection. When his eyes expreſſed the utmoſt fondneſs, they overflowed with grief. I begged to know the cauſe of his ſorrow, but he left me without ſatisfying a curioſity which aroſe only from affection.

The following day ſeemed to have made little alteration in the ſtate of Lord Dorcheſter's mind; but having promiſed Lady Paleſtine to make part of a very large

large company at her houſe that evening, we went thither at the proper hour.

The variety of objects and converſation, diſpelled the gloom which oppreſſed my ſpirits before I left my own houſe. My melancholy was not proof againſt Sir Charles's vivacity, which even exceeded itſelf that night, and the evening paſſed away with great mirth. I ſpoke ſeveral times to my Lord, but could obtain little anſwer. His grief affected me; but ſtill the natural gaiety of my temper, ſupported by all that could flatter my vanity or amuſe my underſtanding, was not to be ſoon overcome. But at length no longer able to endure the ſight of his uneaſineſs, I determined to go home if he would accompany me, in hopes that he would no longer conceal the cauſe of his affliction from importunities ariſing only from the deſire of endeavouring to alleviate it.

I went up to him, told him I was going to retire, and begged to know when he would follow me.

Judge of my ſurprize, when the man whom I had never heard utter any thing but the words of love and tenderneſs, anſwered me in the ſharpeſt tone, "ne-

" never, madam! if you want company,
" you have too good intereſt with many
" in the room to be denied theirs; you
" had better therefore change your appli-
" cation; and may depend on not being
" impertinently interrupted by me."

My amazement deprived me of ſpeech, and if it had not, it would have been of little uſe; for he gave me no time to anſwer him, leaving the room as ſoon as he had done ſpeaking. I was ſo much ſhocked I had not power to follow him down ſtairs, as I certainly ſhould have expoſed myſelf by doing, had I been able. As my ſurprize abated, ſo my grief increaſed; it overcame me ſo intirely, that I believe I ſhould have ſunk on the floor, had not Sir Charles Liſdale perceived the change of my countenance and offered his aſſiſtance, by which means I left the room and got into my chair. He enquired, with kind concern, the occaſion of my diſorder, but perceiving me incapable of either hearing or ſpeaking, he ſupported me in ſilence to, and attended my chair to my own houſe, unſeen by me till I was carried into the hall. Seeing me ſurprized at his preſence, he excuſed it by ſaying " he could not forbear accompanying me,

" leſt

" leſt the motion of the chair might make " me ſtill worſe; nor could he be eaſy " without knowing how I was on getting " home." But he found me ſo little better that he received no ſatisfaction from this ſecond view, and was ſtill more alarmed when he learned from my ſervant that ſhe had never ſeen me thus ſeized before.

Sir Charles intimated, that he could not reſt without hearing how I did after I was put to bed, but my maid having more conſideration for me than for his eaſe, prudently told him that any noiſe might diſturb me; upon which he ſaid, that rather than run the leaſt hazard of that, he would endure his impatience and anxiety till morning.

The only relief I could now feel was from being alone, that I might give an uninterrupted flow to my grief, which was indeed exceſſive. I had never before felt the anger of one I loved; and had learned to think nothing but tenderneſs and good humour could fall from Lord Dorcheſter's lips. Sir Charles's ſervant watched the opening of the door the next morning, having been ordered not to knock for fear of diſturbing my reſt. Alas! my night had all been ſpent in weeping.

When

When my ſervant informed him that I was rather worſe than the evening before, having had no ſleep, he, who had a real attachment to his maſter, ſaid, "he "knew not how to carry Sir Charles that "account, for that he had not been able "to go to bed all night; and he feared "ſuch an addition to his anxiety might "prove very hurtful to him." This, and the enquiries after my health, ſent by ſuch of my acquaintance as obſerved that I was ill when I left Lady Paleſtine's, my maid repeated to me; for perceiving that grief was my diſorder, ſhe endeavoured, as much as poſſible, to divert my thoughts. Theſe attentions from people for whom I had ſo ſmall a regard in compariſon with my love for Lord Dorcheſter, made me the more ſhocked at his not ſending any enquiry after me; tho' I thought he could not be ignorant of the anxiety his words muſt occaſion. The reflection that I was in a new world, without a friend, unthought of by him, increaſed my affliction, as it gave me the worſe opinion of the man who could thus wound a heart ſo entirely his, when he knew I had no comforter into whoſe boſom I could pour my grief, whoſe tenderneſs could ſoothe,

ſoothe, or care redreſs them. Was every one more kind than this man, who had ever before appeared ſo tender a friend? If I had been guilty of any fault to which my ignorance had ſubjected me, for I was conſcious of none towards him, might I not have expected an eaſy pardon from one to whom I had forgiven ſo great an injury as forcibly taking me from my aunt, whoſe temper could never make me feel ſuch agonies as his caprice now gave me? Theſe were my reflections the whole day, during which Sir Charles called himſelf ſeveral times at my door to enquire into the ſtate of my health, deſirous of a more particular account than he could expect by a ſervant. Towards evening a thought aroſe, that perhaps this great change in a diſpoſition, which uſed to be unclouded, equally ſerene, and pleaſing, might proceed from diſtemper. The poſſibility of this no ſooner ſtruck me, than I began to take myſelf to taſk for complaining of him, when I ought rather to pity, nurſe and attend him. I now arraigned my own heart more bitterly than I had yet done his, and looking on my preſent apprehenſion as moſt afflicting, prayed that from whatever cauſe his unkindneſs aroſe,

aroſe, it might fall on me alone, that I only might ſuffer, and he be eaſy tho' I was miſerable.

To quiet the preſent horrors of my mind, I ſent to his houſe to know how he did, and waited the return of my meſſenger with the impatience of diſtraction; which was rather changed than abated, by his bringing me word that my Lord had been abroad the whole day. Notwithſtanding my imaginary diſintereſtedneſs, I ſeverely felt this proof of indifference. Not once to enquire the effect of his behaviour! not to comfort me with one kind word! was an exceſs of cruelty; which made me think ſuch a heart as mine, capable of the deepeſt impreſſions and ſtrongeſt ſenſations, very unfit to be in any degree linked with one who could be both ſo amiable and ſo cruel. Nor could night give any reſpite to my affliction.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIII.

THE next day reduced me to envy the miſery of the day before, which I had then thought moſt deplorable. A letter being delivered to me, the ſight of his hand on the ſuperſcription revived my ſpirits, and ſpread joy over a heart before immerſed in ſorrow. I opened it with impatience, to ſee in how kind a manner he would at once ſign both his and my pardon: but, oh heavens! how was I diſappointed! Your ladyſhip, who never met with the like trials, will, in imagining it, fall as ſhort of what I felt, as I ſhould do if I endeavoured to deſcribe the ſhock I received at reading the following lines:

" A cold addreſs but ill agrees with
" the love I have born thee once, dear
" Ophelia! but it is ſuitable to the ſen-
" timents I ſhall hereafter preſerve to-
" wards her. Oh! Ophelia! you have
" by deceit, I cannot call it ingratitude,
" for I could not demand a return, cured
" my heart of a weakneſs ſcarcely to be
" parallelled.

" parallelled. But how painful is the re-
" medy: I have doated on you to exceſs;
" and have been lulled into happineſs by
" the falſe appearances of your approving
" my love: but you have at laſt awaked
" me from this bliſsful dream, and ſhewn
" me that truth and conſtancy are not to
" be found in a female heart in any cli-
" mate; that the levity of your ſex makes
" them a prey to the neweſt lover, and
" prefer the fluttering of a wit to the
" conſtant attachment of an affectionate
" heart. If this diſappointment to my
" fond hopes ſhould make me miſerable,
" it may puniſh me for my folly, but my
" reſentment ſhall never render me cri-
" minal towards you. I have brought
" you from a fixed habitation, introduced
" you into a life of gaiety and pleaſure,
" to the charms of which you are ſenſible
" if ever woman was. Your taſte is ſo
" refined, and your knowledge ſo much
" increaſed, that you would but ill reliſh
" the ruſtic ſolitude of your former cot-
" tage; I ſhall therefore remit to you
" 400l. a year, which will enable you to
" live where you now are; and as ſoon as
" my mind acquires a little eaſe, I will ſo
" far extend a regard, which, alas!

Ophelia,

" Ophelia, I fear I ſhall always preſerve,
" as to write you ſome neceſſary advice
" concerning your future conduct; for
" whatever I am, I muſt wiſh you happy,
" and that thoſe who poſſeſs more of your
" affections may adore you as I have
" done. I am carrying an afflicted heart
" into the country, unable to ſtay in town
" after having reſolved never to ſee you
" more. Your humanity would make
" you pity, tho' you cannot love me, if
" you knew with what agonizing pain I
" ſay, farewel for ever!"

A ſlender judgment of what I muſt have felt at the peruſal of this letter, will ſerve to convince you that I was the greateſt object of pity. Regardleſs of the preſence of my ſervants, I could not forbear exclaiming, " was it not enough to forſake
" me, but muſt he add reproaches to his
" cruelty! I practice deceit! my igno-
" rance of ſuch vile arts renders it impoſ-
" ſible, even though my diſpoſition was
" not ſo open that I ſpeak my thoughts
" as freely as they riſe; and yet my
" countenance expreſſes them before my
" words can do it, and were I to pollute
" my tongue with a falſhood, would con-
" tradict

" tradict it, and convict me of an un-
" truth. But they are all innocent; what
" then ſhould hinder me from revealing
" them? And yet this man accuſes me
" of what he muſt know is a ſtranger to
" my heart. Arts and concealments are
" for the inconſtant and injurious; for
" thoſe who can oppreſs the innocent, and
" make the friendleſs wretched by their
" cruelty. Good heaven! do I deſerve
" this character? Would to God he
" could as juſtly defend himſelf from it!

As ſoon as my maid perceived me ſo far deprived of my ſenſes as to give ſuch free and unguarded vent to my diſtraction, ſhe ſent the footman who had brought the letter, out of the room, and was the only perſon preſent during my exclamation; to which a ſhort pauſe ſucceeded, and then I ran out of the room, with an air ſo frantic as greatly terrified her. She purſued me, and ſtopping me before I got out of the houſe, aſked " what I deſigned " to do?" My purpoſe was ſo full in my thoughts, that I told her " I was going to " Lady Paleſtine's, to aſk her where Lord " Dorcheſter was? what he meant by " quarrelling with me? and in what I " had offended?"

She

She kept faſt hold of me till ſhe convinced me I was in a very improper way to appear before ſo much company as I muſt be ſenſible, if I reflected on the hour, was then at Lady Paleſtine's: but to pacify me, in ſome degree, ſhe went herſelf, and ſending in a moſt preſſing meſſage to her ladyſhip, brought her out of company to ſpeak with her. All the anſwer ſhe brought me, was, that "Lady Paleſtine "was ignorant of every circumſtance, ex- "cept that Lord Dorcheſter was gone out "of town." As ſoon as the diſtraction of my mind abated enough to give me leave to attend to the effects it had upon me, I found myſelf extremely ill, and was ſoon unable to ſit up. My maid, truly alarmed at my condition, ſent for a phyſician, who declared me in a high fever, and ordered me to be kept in bed. But the pains that afflicted me, could not draw my attention from my Lord's behaviour. My firſt reſolution was to refuſe the income he offered; I would not give him room to think he had made me any recompence for the injuries he had done, or that it was in his power to pay me for what he had made me ſuffer, firſt by tearing me from all my ſoul could wiſh, and then by abandoning

abandoning me in a ſtrange land, unfriended and unknown.

If my Lord's inconſtancy had deprived me of my greateſt good, I determined my own ſpirit ſhould diſcharge me from the leſſer; if he thought me beneath his friendſhip, I thought myſelf above his charity, nor could his whole fortune have given me the joy I ſhould have received from one ſymptom of regard. I had money enough remaining to carry me back to my beloved aunt, who grew more dear to me from my Lord's ill treatment. From her tender and conſtant affection I hoped to find relief; in her goodneſs expected to receive conſolation for the faults of others, and, far from this bad town, to learn to forget it and its cruel inhabitants, whoſe minds are as variable as their climate.

Theſe hopes and reſolutions were the reſult of my thoughts while I remained ſenſible; but, as to cure a diſtemper by medicine, which proceeds from anxiety of mind, is a vain attempt, I grew at laſt ſo bad, that I was light-headed, to which I may attribute my recovery. Want of reflection did what reaſon could not effect; it quieted my mind, and my conſtitution received benefit from it; for as

grief

grief was the cauſe of my illneſs, the loſs of the ſenſe of my affliction left me to youth and natural ſtrength, and my fever abated. As ſoon as I recovered my ſenſes, I was apprized of my danger, and once more ſaw death without terror. My doctor aſſured me he had ſaved my life. I could not have thanked him with a tolerable grace, had I believed him, but my credulity fell ſhort of his aſſurances: I was convinced my diſtemper was beyond the reach of human art, and preſſed him "to ceaſe atempting a cure that would "afford him little ſatisfaction, and me "none." I was ſorry his benevolent diſpoſition ſhould throw away on me the time which he dedicated to the relief of mankind. But when he was gone, my maid told me he would not part with a patient ſo eaſily, as his benefit was certain, tho' mine was doubtful, and came in a pleaſing ſhape; for he received current gold in exchange for his advice, and declared war to the patient's palate, in return for that reward, which taken in the greateſt quantities, was in no danger of creating a nauſea.

When I found my doctor mercenary, inſtead of charitable, I felt leſs veneration for

for him; but no longer wondered money was held in ſo high eſteem, ſince people thought they could purchaſe health with it. Could I have flattered myſelf that would have brought me eaſe of mind, I ſhould have been very rapacious, but "eſteem and love were never to be ſold." and thoſe were the things wanting to my peace.

My illneſs deferred the execution of my intended departure from London, but the reſolution continued.

All my acquaintance ſent daily enquiries after my health. Sir Charles Liſdale never called leſs than twice a day. The firſt perſon I ſaw was Lady Paleſtine, with whom I hoped to indulge myſelf with talking of my diſtreſs; but my ſpirits were ſo weak, that when ſhe came many paſt circumſtances crouded to my remembrance, and I was choaked with tears. She ſtaid ſome time in expectation of my growing more able to converſe, ſeeming deſirous to talk with me on the ſubject moſt at my heart; but finding no amendment, was afraid her preſence, by agitating me ſo greatly, might do me harm, and therefore left me, with a deſire that I would let her know when I was more able to ſee her.

Not

Not underſtanding the paſſion of jealouſy, I did not perceive any ſigns of remaining love in Lord Dorcheſter, or ſome flattering hopes might have been my conſolation; I ſhould then have ſeen, that the man who wrote that letter was not indifferent; of which I was now ſo well perſuaded, that I never conſidered there was a poſſibility of his being otherwiſe. What ſerved to convince me the more entirely of it, was his never having yet made any enquiry after me, tho' I had been ſo long and ſo dangerouſly ill. Seeing every thing in the worſt light, I did not conſider that he might not know it. The continual meſſages I received from many gentlemen, with the more particular enquiries of Sir Charles Liſdale and Lord Larborough, a young nobleman who always followed me about like a ſhadow, a conſtant, rather than an agreeable attendant, for he ſeldom ſpoke to me, made Lord Dorcheſter's neglect appear the greater.

At firſt I imagined my Lord's affection for me never real, or it could not ſo ſoon be entirely extinguiſhed; but I now began to think even humanity was dead in him. Good nature would have ſuggeſted to him, but friendſhip would have forced him

him to adminiſter ſome conſolation to the misfortunes of one whom he had introduced to miſery, tho' ſhe ſeemed to have been placed by fortune out of the reach of his inhumanity. It never once occurred to me, that he did not imagine I wanted any conſolation; and that from this error aroſe all my grief and his. My afflictions ſeemed near an end; tho' my fever was gone, yet I did not recover; I was pale and emaciated, had neither ſtrength to move, nor ſpirits to ſpeak, equally weak both in mind and body, and, had not a ray of hope at laſt ſhone upon me, I believe my exiſtence had not been of long duration.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXIV.

AS I was deſirous of converſing with Lady Paleſtine, I ſent to her as ſoon as I thought I had brought myſelf to ſee her with leſs diſcompoſure. Upon turning the diſcourſe to Lord Dorcheſter's ſudden departure from London, I frankly ſpoke the ſentiments of my heart, and expreſſed my grief as well as aſtoniſhment at ſo immediate an alteration. She told me, "ſhe was well perſuaded that jea-"louſy of Sir Charles Liſdale was the oc-"caſion of it;" and ſhe herſelf ſeemed to have ſome ſuſpicion of my giving the Baronet the preference. As I had always appeared without diſguiſe to my Lord, it was moſt incredible to me that he could entertain any ſuch opinion; and my earneſtneſs, as well as my late diſorder, when ſhe learned it was the conſequence of Lord Dorcheſter's behaviour, were pretty ſufficient proofs to her Ladyſhip that ſhe had been under a miſtake. However, had they not been convincing, all poſſibility of doubt was removed before ſhe left me. As we were ſitting, a meſſage was brought

up to me from Mrs. Belfaſt, a lady with whom I had become acquainted at lady Paleſtine's, importing, that "ſhe was "at the door to enquire after my health; "and if I was well enough to admit her, "would be extremely glad to wait on "me." Not being fit to ſee company, I had hitherto declined all viſits; but as Lady Paleſtine's coach was at the door, I thought I could not, without a manifeſt affront, refuſe ſeeing Mrs. Belfaſt.

The lady was extremely intimate with Sir Charles Liſdale; and had no ſooner done expreſſing her concern at my looking ſo ill, than ſhe began to tell me "how "very ſenſibly Sir Charles had been af-"flicted; and that he had engaged her "to beg my permiſſion for his waiting on "me to congratulate me on my reco-"very, and to receive his cure from ſee-"ing mine; till when he could enjoy no "health."

Lord Dorcheſter's behaviour had diſguſted me with the ſex; and ſince Lady Paleſtine had given me reaſon to think my Lord was jealous of Sir Charles, I was more particularly averſe to ſeeing him. With more ſincerity and poſitiveneſs than was conſiſtent

conſiſtent with good breeding, I immediately refuſed to receive his viſit.

But Mrs. Belfaſt was too zealous an advocate to be rebuffed by one denial; and being extremely intimate with Lady Paleſtine, ſhe ſaid "ſhe thought her preſence "need not prevent her from performing "another part of her commiſſion, if I "refuſed the firſt." She then made a long panegyric on Sir Charles, expatiated on the exceſs of his love for me, of his uneaſineſs at being debarred my converſation, extolled his good qualities, his underſtanding and temper, and various merits, which were unneceſſarily enumerated to me who knew him; and ended with ſaying, that "if I would not give "him the liberty of telling me how much "he loved me, ſhe was commanded to "do it for him; and to let me know that "his higheſt ambition was to be united to "me for life. If I would conſent to marry "him, my happineſs ſhould be his ſole "ſtudy; that he and his fortune would "always be at my diſpoſal; and he ſhould "think himſelf under the higheſt obliga-"tion for the felicity he muſt enjoy in an "union with me; that his eſtate was "very conſiderable, and I ſhould myſelf

" direct the ſettlements; for he could ne-
" ver eſteem his whole fortune in any
" degree equal to my merits.

This propoſal ſtartled me; it ſhewed more true affection than all Lord Dorcheſter's actions. To bind himſelf for life, to give me the command of his fortune, was a ſtrong proof of his good opinion. My own reflections engaged me for a few minutes, and thoſe few ſerved to ſhew me, that though I always eſteemed Sir Charles, was delighted with his converſation, and now felt myſelf ſincerely grateful, yet I could not think of marrying him. This I told Mrs. Belfaſt in the plaineſt terms, acknowledging, at the ſame time, my real regard for him, and my gratitude for ſo generous a proof of his affection.

She endeavoured to prevail upon me to give a more favourable anſwer; and ſo earneſtly preſſed for my conſent, that ſhe convinced me ſhe was a warm friend, and no bad advocate: but at laſt, aſſured of my inflexibility, ſhe went away, telling me that " ſhe ſaw to what Sir
" Charles owed the misfortune of a re-
" fuſal; had not my affections been en-
" gaged, I muſt have accepted his offers;

" fers; but he had feared to find Lord " Dorcheſter an impediment to the com- " pletion of his wiſhes, and ſhe grieved " that ſhe muſt be obliged to give him " ſo ſtrong a proof of the reaſonableneſs " of his apprehenſions."

When Mrs. Belfaſt was gone, Lady Paleſtine aſked me why I refuſed a propoſal ſo much to my advantage. I knew not well how to anſwer; my heart, not my reaſon, gave the denial, and its emotions are not ſo eaſily deſcribed. All I had to ſay, was, that " I could not think of mar- " rying him. I liked his company ex- " tremely, was convinced of his love, " and grateful for it; that marriage muſt " give him ſuch a title to my affection " as even Lord Dorcheſter could not diſ- " approve, and could not imagine inter- " fered with my friendſhip for him, the " only ſort of attachment he required, " for he had never given me ſo ſtrong a " proof of his good opinion as to think " of me in the capacity of a wife."

Lady Paleſtine aſked " if I was then " determined to marry no man." I re- plied, " indeed ſuch was my reſolution. I " was ſenſible from this ſmall trial that " I could not bear to look on any man

" in the light of a huſband, except Lord " Dorcheſter; and I wiſhed only to live " with him as a friend; but thoſe bleſſed " days were over; and I had now no " other deſign than to return, as ſoon " as my ſtrength would permit me, to " my ſolitude, and dedicate the remain- " der of my life to recompence my aunt " for what I had involuntarily occaſioned " her to ſuffer."

I ſaw Lady Paleſtine liſten to me with ſome contempt. When I had done ſpeaking, ſhe, with a ſneer, intermixed the words, girliſh paſſions, fooliſh conſtancy, romantick notions, imaginary delicacy, with her anſwer; but I could have forgiven her a greater affront for the conſolation ſhe had brought me by attributing Lord Dorcheſter's behaviour to jealouſy; though it ſeemed to me ſcarcely poſſible, yet my deſpair ſeized this glimmering of hope. I once more opened his letter; it correſponded with what ſhe had ſaid; and I now fancied ſome ſentences in it expreſſed a remaining tenderneſs. But if this was the caſe, I thought it ſtrange that he did not enquire into the ſtate of my heart, and not build a belief on circumſtances, when he might have had my word

word for information. It never occurred to me, that my teſtimony muſt appear fallible to a man who had been uſed to ſee ſo much falſhood; and that

——Trifles light as air,
Are to the jealous, confirmations ſtrong,
As proofs of holy writ.——

Three days paſſed in reaſoning on a poſſibility, which was the foundation of all my comfort; till at laſt I began to ſay with Solomon, that "hope deferred, mak-"eth the heart ſick." My hopes were too ſlightly raiſed to ſupport any degree of ſpirits for ſo long a time; they grew faint, and would ſoon have vaniſhed quite, and left me again a prey to deſpair, had they not been driven away by certainty. In the afternoon a letter was brought me from Lord Dorcheſter; I imagined it contained the inſtructions he promiſed me, yet opened it with a melancholy ſatisfaction, as his hand would endear the contents, let them be otherwiſe diſagreeable. But joy broke in at once upon my mind at ſeeing the moſt affectionate addreſs, followed by words more tender. In the humbleſt manner, "he

" begged leave to wait on me, to aſk a " pardon from me, which he could ne- " ver give to himſelf, for a behaviour " ſo inexcuſable, founded on an injuri- " ous ſuſpicion, too raſhly conceived and " reſented." He expreſſed ſo lively a grief for the cruel effects of it, that had I had ſpirits to have retained anger, I muſt have been pacified; he condemned himſelf in ſuch bitterneſs of ſoul, that I could ſcarcely forbear reſenting the injury he did the friend of my heart, as I then again eſteemed him; and was ready to think it the only fault he had committed.

This letter found me in ſo weak a condition, that I had not till then been able to get down ſtairs without aſſiſtance; but ſuch a cordial is joy, that I ran down to the ſervant to enquire where his Lord was; who informing me that he was waiting impatiently at his houſe in town for my anſwer, I told him I would not detain him till I could write; but deſired he would acquaint his Lord that I wiſhed to ſee him as ſoon as poſſible.

The ſervant was not long in carrying his meſſage, nor his maſter in obeying it; few minutes paſſed before the flutter of expectation

expectation was put an end to by my Lord's arrival. He entered the room with a confuſion that deprived him of utterance; and taking my hand with a diffidence and melancholy that hurt me, preſſed it to his lips. My ſpirits, overcome with the agitation they had been in, failed me, and I began to weep more like a mourner than one in the exceſs of joy. My Lord accompanied my tears with ſome of his, which ſeemed greatly to relieve him, and reſtore him to his ſpeech. "I cannot, my Ophelia," ſaid he, "preſume to aſk your pity; I am "oppreſſed with the conſciouſneſs of "rather deſerving your hatred; but I "am ſure if you knew what I have "ſuffered, and ſtill ſuffer, your generous "and gentle nature would look on me, "however blameable, yet as an object "worthy your compaſſion, ſince my puniſhment has been adequate to the "greateſt offence, and if it could be "expiated muſt be ſufficient to waſh it "away. I thought it impoſſible to be "a greater wretch than I was while I "imagined Sir Charles Liſdale poſſeſſed "your heart; but ſince I learnt from "Lady Paleſtine the injuſtice I have done

" you, and how grievouſly you have " ſuffered by it, I have been ten thou- " ſand times more miſerable; the pale- " neſs of your cheeks, and the languor " in your eyes, are reproaches that rend " my heart. To ſee you thus, is worſe " than being torn from you. Oh my " Ophelia, can you ever forgive me."

My Lord, indeed, appeared ſo very wretched, that I could not add to his ſelf reproaches; but, on the contrary, endeavoured to extenuate his fault; I aſſured him, " that if his neglect had made me " ſick, his kindneſs would be my cure; " that it had almoſt made me well al- " ready; and that the pleaſure I now " felt compenſated all paſt pains, which " would only ſerve, henceforward, to " heighten all my happineſs by compa- " riſon." But all I could ſay ſeemed to increaſe his grief, inſtead of alleviating it. He begged " I would be leſs generous, " and ſaid my goodneſs added to his mi- " ſery, in ſhewing him ſtill more criminal " in wronging, in afflicting, an angel." I found, by converſing with him, that he had deſired Lady Paleſtine to obſerve my behaviour, and diſcover my ſentiments; that ſhe had written him word of what paſſed

paſſed in her viſit to me, which affected him ſo much that he ſet out that inſtant, and would not ſuffer the darkeſt, moſt ſtormy night in the whole winter, to ſtop him in his journey, ſo impatient was he to ſee me. The moment he arrived, he went to Lady Paleſtine, to learn every circumſtance more particularly than he could by her letter, which both ſatisfied and touched him ſtill more ſenſibly.

He could not venture to ſee one whom he had ſo much injured, as he was pleaſed to think he had done me, without firſt aſking permiſſion; but not having patience to ſtay for his ſervant's return with my anſwer, he met him half way, which occaſioned his being with me ſo immediately.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXV.

I NOW found that nothing was ſo beneficial to the conſtitution as eaſe of mind. A few days paſſed in happineſs, made a greater progreſs in my recovery, than all the medicines which the phyſician yet had preſcribed me. As grief was the cauſe of my ſickneſs, it was but natural that health ſhould be the conſequence of my felicity.

I now firſt learnt to play the hypocrite: my Lord ſeemed ſo tenderly anxious for my health, and reproached himſelf ſo much for every pain I felt, that when I was moſt ill, I durſt not indulge myſelf in the peeviſh ſatisfaction of complaining; perceiving that he ſuffered more by my ſickneſs than I did; for though I inſtantly forgave him, he could not forgive himſelf. Had it not been for the conſideration, that what has once been, may be again, and the fear of my Lord's relapſing at any time into the ſame ſort of whim, I ſhould have been happier than ever; for he was now never an hour in the day abſent. Even ſickneſs had its pleaſure;

pleaſure; his care and watchful attendance turned pain into delight. I took advantage of my diſorder to excuſe my keeping at home, that I might not loſe my Lord's company for thoſe who I began to ſee acted upon cuſtom, ſolliciting what they did not deſire, and begging for what they would not chuſe to have granted. I had learnt that to be impertinent was civil, and thoroughly troubleſome was being perfectly well-bred. I found that the aim of the complaiſant was not ſo much to pleaſe, as to appear pleaſed; truſting to vanity for rendering it mutual. In conſequence of theſe cuſtoms, I was too ſoon obliged to mortify myſelf and plague others, to avoid affronting them, though I deferred as long as my health would leave me the ſhadow of an excuſe.

The firſt day I went to Lady Paleſtine's, I met Sir Charles Liſdale there, who ſeemed to have loſt all vivacity, which had rendered him ſo agreeable. He approached me with a very dejected air, and uſed all poſſible intreaties to perſuade me to admit a viſit from him. When they failed, he expatiated on his paſſion with an elegance and appearance of ſincerity that affected me, though not with love. The very

very thoughts of marrying him created a kind of diſlike in me, which I did not feel before; but yet he ſeemed ſo ſeriouſly touched in all he ſaid, that I was ſorry to add to his uneaſineſs. Endeavouring to comfort him, I aſſured him of my regard and gratitude, expreſſing great pleaſure in the expectation of ſeeing him often at Lady Paleſtine's as uſual; but he told me that "if I was abſolute in my "determination, he muſt ſeek for eaſe "in abſence; for that he ſhould be "wretched with ſo poor a return, unleſs "my cruelty could conquer his paſſion." I could not help thinking the whole ſex diſtracted: to forſwear any farther acquaintance with me, if he could not have my company at all times, and fixed for life, appeared to me as unreaſonable as if a man was to kill himſelf becauſe he did not poſſeſs every thing he wiſhed in this world; refuſing to enjoy the ſolid comforts of life, if ſome trifling benefit was denied him. I was ſorry Sir Charles was determined to avoid me; I thereby loſt the converſation of a man I greatly liked and eſteemed; and Lord Dorcheſter now appeared ſo eaſy about him, that I had no reaſon to fear any inconveniences

niences ſhould ariſe from our acquaintance. My Lord endeavoured to account for his jealouſy from the general inconſtancy of both ſexes; but I could not think this a ſufficient reaſon for it, as inconſtancy towards him could not be ſo well juſtified as in many caſes; for by what I could learn, the general practice of deceit makes people appear ſo much better at firſt, that on long acquaintance they prove to be, that to continue to love them, rather than ceaſe to do ſo, ſhould be termed inconſtancy. When the merit diſappears, the object of a reaſonable affection is no longer the ſame, and love, like all other ſtructures, ſhould fall when the foundation ſinks: our love ſhould follow our eſteem, and conſequently no one can have a right to the one, after he has forfeited his title to the other. When the deceit appears, by the maſk's falling off the mind, the man can have no better demand upon our hearts than his picture has; indeed ſcarcely ſo much, as the painted canvas is moſt innocent, but the daubed hypocrite moſt criminal. Lord Dorcheſter's virtues ſeemed to me too real and permanent to reduce a woman to change,

and

and therefore I could not allow he had a good excuſe for his ſuſpicions; and I was fully determined to avoid exciting any for the future, by watching my behaviour more narrowly, and not leaving my vivacity under the command of my innocence, ſince that could not defend it from giving offence. Sir Charles could no longer be an object of uneaſineſs; for after meeting him once more at Lady Paleſtine's, when he took a moſt affectionate farewel, which I returned with all the ſincerity of my warmeſt good wiſhes, he left London, giving out that he was going to make the tour of Europe. He politely ſaid, "in hopes "by the variety of objects, and diſſi- "pation, to baniſh me from his mind." I could not think but this arduous affair might have been contrived with leſs trouble; and have been more convinced of it ſince experience has ſhewn me that the memory is not one of thoſe hard compoſitions, out of which impreſſions are ſo very difficult to eraſe; I have ſeen a woman waſh her lover from her remembrance in leſs time than ſhe could get a ſpot of ink out of her ruffle.

Could

Could I have brought myſelf to follow the cuſtom of being denied, I ſhould have been tempted to abate my civility to my acquaintance. But the practice of falſhood, however trifling the circumſtance, appeared to me a thing of conſequence; it learns people to diſregard truth; and we cannot expect thoſe whom we teach to lye for our convenience, ſhould forbear it when it may turn to their advantage. It is corrupting the minds of perſons, who, being in our power, ought to be the objects of our care, whoſe principles we ſhould watch over and improve by precept and example. Your Ladyſhip has obſerved, that my opinion and practice are ſtill the ſame in this particular, though acknowledging the inconveniencies ariſing from it; but greater evils cannot diſpenſe with our adherence to truth. The temptation was certainly never ſtronger than at the time of which I am ſpeaking; when Lord Dorcheſter's conſtant converſation was a neceſſary reward for what I had lately ſuffered: and yet I had leſs liberty of enjoying it at home than abroad, as I was obliged to direct all my converſation to my viſitors.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

AMONG other places where I went after the recovery of my happineſs and my health, was the maſquerade. The company, beſide Lady Paleſtine, Lord Dorcheſter, and Lord Larborough, who was become very intimate with my Lord, were Lady Cambridge, Lady Rocheſter, and Miſs Baden, of whom I ſhall give your Ladyſhip ſome little account before I proceed with them to the Haymarket. Lady Cambridge claims the firſt place; and far be it from me to rob her of a precedency ſhe would not have relinquiſhed, no not in paſſing over a dunghill, for her whole eſtate. For the honour of having been the firſt woman, I believe ſhe would ſoon have been contented to have reſigned her exiſtence, and to have lain as long in the grave as our mother Eve has. With all this ſhe was courteous to exceſs; for being perſuaded that a word from her was a great honour to thoſe who received it, and being of a benevolent diſpoſition, ſhe generouſly beſtowed that ineſtimable

ble favour on all ſhe met. Humility was the virtue on which ſhe particularly piqued herſelf; and to make it known to others, ſhe lived in a perfect convulſion of civility, and had not a limb or feature that was not as much overſtrained by the violence of her endeavours as her complaiſance. In the height of theſe agitations, one could as little know her perſon as her mind by the courteſy ſhe profeſſed. No one ſo bitterly inveighed againſt proud perſons, telling you that pride was her deteſtation. Convinced her approbation ſtamped a value on every thing, ſhe would praiſe every part of your dreſs, in order to give a dignity to trifles. I never ſaw a woman who ſo truly laboured in her calling, for affability was her profeſſion. If it was in the power of a perſon one did not eſteem, to humble one, the impetuoſity of her civility would have done it; for her complaiſance was an inſult, and her fawning, inſolence. They appeared only to her inferiors; to her equals in birth, ſhe was ſtately and imperious. Like the generous lion, ſhe would condeſcend to engage with an inſignificant plebeian, but would enter the combat with

with a true heroick ſpirit, if her antagoniſt was of ſuch noble blood as deſerved her notice, and defend her glorious prerogative of precedency at the expence of every rule of good breeding. Lady Rocheſter was a perſon of ſublimer notions than to diſpute the precedency I have given to Lady Cambridge. She was in perſon tall and thin, formal in her manner, and ſolemn in her countenance. Her chief employ was reading, and the great purpoſe of it to appear wiſe, not to be ſo. She acquired a ſmattering in many ſtudies; and having amaſſed a great number of technical terms, ſhe applied them to all ſubjects, whether proper or improper, and by happy chance they were generally miſplaced. If a ribbon was the topick of diſcourſe, ſhe delivered her ſentiments in mathematical phraſes; if ſhe ordered any of her family affairs, which, indeed, was but ſeldom, for her genius ſoared above ſuch vulgar things, ſhe would borrow her expreſſions from metaphyſicks, and talk of the "entity of a piece of beef, the non-"exiſtence of a pigeon pye and the "heterogenous particles in ſalmigon-"di;" or changing ſcience, but ſtill remaining

maining ſcientific, would expatiate on the "infinitiſſimals in minced meat." To deſcribe an aſſembly, ſhe would call aſtronomy to her aſſiſtance, and algebra muſt furniſh its quota of words, to enable her to inform you of the numbers that were at it. No perſon could be mentioned without reminding her of ſome one in antiquity. If a gentleman appeared inattentive, "he was as abſent as Archimedes "when Syracuſe was taken." If a perſon expreſſed concern at the great prevalence of vice, "he was like Heraclitus, weep-"ing for follies he could not cure; "and therefore ſhe adviſed him to inha-"bit a tub, like Diogenes, unleſs he would "ceaſe to expect perfection in finite be-"ings, endowed with free-will, and void "of all preſcience; for that all ages had "been corrupt, and every nation vicious, "except ſome few;" which ſhe would not omit to mention, any more than to enumerate the different vices of all kingdoms, beginning with Cain's envy and cruelty, and ſometimes ſcarcely ſparing the frailty of our firſt parents. If the perſon whom ſhe addreſſed, as would often be the caſe, happened to laugh at the inundation of wiſdom ſhe beſtowed upon

upon him, ſhe would obſerve, " that tho' " riſibility was one of the moſt diſtin- " guiſhing characteriſtics of the human " ſpecies, yet as laughter aroſe from pride, " it ought to be ſuppreſſed:" but if he did not compoſe his countenance into proper gravity on this rebuke, ſhe would declare him " as indocile as Nero to Se- " neca's inſtructions," and therefore leave " him. If a man had an impediment in his ſpeech, " he ſtammered like Alcibiades." A narrow paſſage was " the " ſtreights of Thermopylæ;" and if any people ſtood at one end of it, ſhe never failed diſcovering a Leonidas amongſt them. If a lady whiſpered a piece of ſcandal, " ſhe was more ſevere than the Athenian Oſtraciſm, from which the juſt Ariſtides could not eſcape uncenſured." If ſhe was offended with a fop, ſhe declared him " more effeminate than Sardanapalus, " and more indolent than the moſt inac- " tive of the Merovigienne Race. A country ſquire came by chance into her company once when I was preſent, and ſhe cried out " he was more ſavage than " the Huns, Goths, or Vandals; and " Attila or Genſerick were polite in com- " pariſon of that barbarian." If a ball

was

was mentioned, ſhe would declare her longing deſire to ſee the Salian dance; and grieve for the degeneracy of mankind in not reviving the Olympic games. A war was particularly fortunate for her; as ſhe would, from the ſmalleſt ſkirmiſh, find an opportunity of talking of the battle of Marathon, of Cannæ, or ſome other equally remote from the preſent age; and of adviſing every General ſhe ſaw to a new way of martialling his army, particularly recommending to him the imitation of the Macedonian phalanx. She affronted ſeven young ladies, reſplendently dreſſed, who were ſtanding together, telling them "they "reminded her of Urſa Major:" the ſimile did not ſound well, and they all frowned moſt uncourteouſly; but could not diſcourage her from addreſſing a lady cloathed in ſilver tiſſue, on her "ſhining "like the Galaxy." Folly, as well as vice, ſometimes is productive of good to part of the ſociety; thus her Ladyſhip's pedantic vanity gave her a right to the praiſe given to Lewis, ſince it muſt be ſaid,

That ſhe the living genius fed,
And rais'd the ſcientific head.

For

For flattering herſelf with a notion of being a female Mecænas, as ſhe would often indirectly call herſelf, ſhe imitated his bounty, if ſhe could not rival his judgment; and reconciled thoſe two parts of man, the mind and body, which are apt to be ſo much at variance, that where one is greatly attended to the other generally ſuffers ſeverely by neglect.

Whether there is leſs variety in good than in evil, or that we are apt to be more conciſe in our panegyrics than our ſatires, I know not, but few words, though much affection, will fall to Miſs Baden's ſhare. Folly is extremely various, but good ſenſe is uniform, and from its perfect conſiſtency is ſoon deſcribed. I had not then met with a woman whom I thought ſo agreeable as Miſs Baden: ſhe was ſeveral years older than myſelf, and ſeemed well acquainted with the world; was ſenſible, polite, modeſt, and genteel; her voice remarkably pleaſing; and tho' not handſome, had a great deal of ſweetneſs in her countenance.

Miſs Baden was a good deal diſpoſed in my favour; ſo well inclined to each other, I believe we ſhould then have become intimate, had not Lord Dorcheſter diſcourag-

ed

ed it, and as much as poſſible interrupted our acquaintance. As he had known her longer, I could not doubt but ſhe had faults which had diſguſted him, tho' I had not perceived them; and therefore avoided her to the utmoſt of my power. The reaſon of my Lord's objecting to her will be obvious to your Ladyſhip, to whom I need not ſay that he feared her diſcernment, and the frankneſs of her nature, which muſt together enable her to ſee the arts uſed to impoſe upon me, as well as the end deſigned by them, and induce her to diſcover the whole to one whom a woman of her ſenſe and virtue muſt pity, for being too likely to become the prey of arts and vices ſhe could not ſuſpect, and therefore was the leſs qualified to baffle.

In this company I went to the maſquerade, which had been ſo deſcribed to me as to raiſe my curioſity very much; but in abſurdity it exceeded what my expectation had formed of it. The motley phantaſtick crew ſeemed to me more like what the imagination repreſents to us in ſleep, when the body is diſordered, than any real objects that ever appear before our eyes; and I have often thought their cauſes bore ſome reſemblance to each other. Dreams

are generally the effects of exceſſes, or of feveriſh heats; maſquerades are the produce of a ſtrange exceſs of fancy, an overheated imagination, ſet to work by a wild deſire of amuſement.

The variety of ſhocking forms terrified me, till uſe had a little familiarized them; and I found that this aſſembly, in the opinion of moſt people, received its terrors, not from maſking the faces, but unmaſking the mind. When I learned that the Engliſh were ſuch great enemies to ſincerity that none dared practice it bare-faced, I allowed there was ſome excuſe for thus defending themſelves from the ill effects of ſo uncommon an indulgence of that virtue. I ſhould imagine ſome relaxation from the painful exerciſes of diſſimulation and flattery neceſſary, and might be productive of general good. But the divine countenance of truth is ſo ſeldom ſeen here, that if by chance ſhe does appear, ſhe is often miſtaken for ill nature. Nor can one wonder at the error; for ſhe is, according to the faſhionable phraſes, "one "that nobody knows," "one that one "never meets any where:" and therefore, if ſhe will intrude, it is not wonderful if ſhe is ſo ill treated as to be forced immediately

immediately to withdraw. The impreſſion ſhe leaves behind only ſerves to make her avoided like a bugbear, and ridiculed without mercy; ſo generally rebuffed, that ſhe can ſcarcely find ſhelter in a cottage; for ſhe ſeldom meets with a very different reception from the moſt ſumptuous palaces down to the pooreſt hut; ſhe may, indeed, perceive that the force of her charms can be properly known only on long acquaintance. There is a ſeverity in her countenance which may pleaſe leſs, at firſt, than the alluring ſweetneſs of faſhood; but, in time, her's is ſeen to be unfading beauty; and tho' ſhe may ſometimes appear ſevere, is never moroſe. The whole majeſty in her mein pleaſes, while it awes beholders, who have any taſte for true lovelineſs; and the longer her votaries ſerve her, the more they are captivated with her charms; time increaſes their love, and familiarity raiſes their adoration, an effect not to be parallelled in any other caſe. From the little acquaintance people have with this divine goddeſs, they ſometimes miſtake one for her who bears a ſmall reſemblance to ſome of her features, but ſo greatly heightened and bloated, that to a diſtinguiſhing

eye ſhe is no more like her than a Saracen's head is like the Venus of Medicis, and her true names are brutality and cenſoriouſneſs. This ape of her divinity, I believe, frequents maſquerades as much or more than ſhe does. Accuſtomed to exceſſes, people loſe the reliſh for the true medium, and make but one ſtep from flattery to abuſe.

Thoſe who have fawned and cringed in a drawing-room till after ten o'clock, will, before eleven, under the ſhelter of an antick dreſs and maſk, be laviſhly dealing out their impertinence and incivility in the Hay-market. Obſerving this to Lady Rocheſter, ſhe replied, "that ſhe looked on "a maſquerade as the Engliſh Saturna-"lia; and as people of faſhion here were "more abject ſlaves to ceremonious forms "than the Roman domeſticks were to "their maſters, it was but reaſonable "that they ſhould have their days of li-"berty to declare their diſguſt with im-"punity, and revile thoſe they diſap-"prove." I found her Ladyſhip ſo prejudiced in favour of the Saturnalia, becauſe of its antiquity, that ſhe made no diſtinction between freedom and licentiouſneſs.

I ſoon

I ſoon perceived that I ſhould acquire more knowledge of the true diſpoſitions of mankind at three of theſe aſſemblies, than by living three months in the polite world; for it was the firſt time I ſaw people in their natural characters; the mind was now apparent, the face only hid; and, as the company I was with were much uſed to theſe entertainments, they could ſee thro' the maſks, which would have concealed many of my acquaintance from my leſs diſcerning eyes, and by their aſſiſtance I perceived the forced prude indulging in coquetry; the affectedly grave giving a looſe to mirth and pleaſure; the fawning, pert and impertinent; great ſtateſmen condeſcending to be trifling, and philoſophers to be fooliſh; all laying aſide thoſe parts which intereſt, the love of power, or of fame, induced them to act in publick.

Lady Cambridge was as new to this entertainment as myſelf, never having been at a maſquerade before; and I could ſee the great familiarity with which every one accoſted her, with as little diſtinction as they could the loweſt plebeian, greatly offended her pride, and ſhe could ſcarcely

prevail on herſelf to conceal ſo much nobility under a maſk. That I might be ſure of the cauſe of the diſturbance I perceived in her, I obſerved that "this diverſion ſeemed an emblem of death; it laid all hearts open, and put an end to all diſſimulation and pretence; and if the reſurrection was not ſo quick, I ſhould be more on a par with the reſt of the world, ſince I was not one of the number who durſt not appear without an internal maſk, unleſs I had an external one to conceal me: that, like the grave too, it levelled all diſtinctions, and brought high and low on an equality." Upon thus touching the tender point, her Ladyſhip anſwered, that "indeed ſhe thought maſquerades could never long meet with encouragement from perſons of rank, unleſs they could find out a method of diſtinguiſhing their conditions." I propoſed a coronet on the maſk, as the eaſieſt method of fixing the ſtamp of rank and faſhion on thoſe who could claim it. She was charmed with the thought, and declared "ſhe would endeavour to bring her friends into it; and if it once became general, ſhe ſhould be a conſtant perſon at thoſe diverſions,

"ſince

" ſince in every reſpect but that levelling " quality ſhe liked them extremely."

A maſquerade by no means anſwered my expectations; the variety of characters, which I was told were there perſonated, ſeemed to promiſe much entertainment; but before half the evening was ſpent, I found that wit, the great requiſite to make them ſo, was a ſcarce commodity; and that after the wearer was once dreſſed, he thought as little of the character he had aſſumed, as he did of the propriety of it when he choſe the habit. Thus one ſees a harlequin limping with difficulty a-croſs the room; an old woman ſkipping and dancing more nimbly than any of the company; a French *petit maitre* penſive or ſleepy; a fortune-teller dancing a minuet; a bear exerciſing the height of ſolemn politeneſs; a ſhepherdeſs bold and impudent; a nun coquettiſhly friſky; a Turk drinking wine; and a Spaniard eaſy, gay, and familiar.

Tho' novelty has great charms, yet I grew weary before the greateſt part of the company; the lateneſs of the hour contributed more than any thing to tire me. I could not reconcile myſelf to the cuſtom of the civilized part of the world, of re-

verſing the orders of nature, of ſleeping the beſt part of the day, neglecting the ſun in his brightneſs, and inventing artificial lights to illumine the night. It was ſtrange to me to find that people were never lively but when they ſhould be at reſt.

I was inclined to ſuſpect them of a ſuperſtitious regard to midnight; eſpecially when I reflected that the only muſic which was on any ſettled eſtabliſhment, and the only lay monitor, performed at that time, and in the darkeſt ſeaſon of the year; a time, to perſons who keep regular hours, the moſt unfit for muſic, ſince there will ſeldom be much harmony in the minds of people waked out of a ſleep which was beginning to refreſh them after the labours of the day, even tho' Cecilia herſelf was to be the muſician.

The Chriſtmas monitor is better imagined, as he firſt rouſes them with his bell; and thus prepares them, with no ſmall ſolemnity to liſten to the moral ſentences which he has moſt ingeniouſly put into verſe. Not ſuch, indeed, as the muſes inſpire, and entitle the author to the pure ſtreams of Helicon; ale being both his inſpirer and his reward; and inſtead of flying

flying on the back of Pegaſus, he creeps with a crutch. This inſtitution I have often thought might be of great uſe in a religion whoſe doctrine was deſigned to fright from ſin by well wrought terrors, rather than to encourage virtue by hopes. The awful ſound of his bell, at an hour to which darkneſs and the ſtillneſs of night gives a ſolemnity, would greatly heighten the figures and ſtrengthen the metaphors, in a diſcourſe formed to work on the fears of our timorous imaginations. Religious hobgoblins, as well as childiſh bugbears, are but little believed in ſunſhine. That great luminary diſpels ſuperſtition as well as all other clouds and vapours; it clears the underſtanding as well as the ſky; it nouriſhes only what is natural, baniſhing all phantaſtick forms, which are forced to fly before it and take ſhelter under the ſhade of night, when the mind is more gloomy and leſs rational. Notwithſtanding my objections of turning the night into day, I was obliged, in great meaſure, to conform to the general cuſtom, tho' never ſo far as to ſuffer it to deprive me of the enjoyment of the bleſſed ſun, whoſe preſence had more charms for me than the company of thoſe who deſpiſed it; ſo that

my nights, not my days, were abridged by theſe late entertainments; and the next was obliged to make up to me for the encroachments on the night before, if requiſite, which it ſeldom was, as I had been accuſtomed to take little ſleep.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

IT was uſual with Lord Dorcheſter and me to take a morning walk, whenever the weather would permit it, in the fields leading to Chelſea; which gave riſe to an adventure ſo intereſting, that I cannot forbear communicating it to your Ladyſhip, tho' it is foreign to the hiſtory I have engaged to give you of myſelf.

For ſeveral days together we obſerved a man, who with care avoided the public path, tho' he walked in the ſame fields. Curioſity at laſt tempted us to go up to him. His ſickly and dejected aſpect excited our compaſſion. Lord Dorcheſter, whoſe humanity made him feel for the diſtreſſes of others, tho' of ſuch a nature as he could never have experienced, was greatly touched with the appearance of wretchedneſs ſo viſible in this man. He was ſitting down on the trunk of a tree; we ſeated ourſelves by him; he attempted to riſe, more from a deſire of flying ſociety than from an humble intention of giving place to perſons who ſeemed more in fortune's

fortune's favour than himſelf; but my Lord would not permit him to leave us. After aſking ſeveral queſtions about indifferent things, and with great difficulty leading him into diſcourſe, my Lord told him, that "he might appear impertinent "in thus forcing himſelf into his acquaintance, but that compaſſion, and a deſire "to aſſiſt him, was his motive. That he "appeared unhappy; and if it was not "improper, we ſhould be infinitely obliged "to him if he would inform us what was "the occaſion of it."

The poor man ſhook his head, and declined complying with his requeſt, ſaying, "nothing was leſs agreeable to hear nor "to relate, than a ſeries of diſtreſſes; that "he made it a rule never to talk of his "misfortunes; for if he met with bad, "ill natured people, they would diſlike "him for being wretched, and avoid him "as if miſery was infectious. On the "contrary, to perſons of humanity he "would not chuſe to give even the pain "of compaſſion." And, indeed, ſo much did he act up to this declaration, that he could not be prevailed upon to give any account of himſelf. My Lord finding he was not likely to ſucceed by intreaties, endeavoured

deavoured to draw him into the ſubject; and taking the hint from his cloaths, which were a tattered ſuit of regimentals, began to expatiate on all the hardſhips to which military men are liable. Among the reſt, he took notice of the unhappy ſtate of a diſbanded regiment. My Lord no ſooner fell on this topic, than it was very viſible in the poor man's countenance that he had hit upon the cauſe of his diſtreſs. My Lord perceiving this, dwelt on the ſubject, and imagined all the caſes in which it could be moſt cruel; ſuppoſed many of theſe men to have wives and children to maintain, out of a half-pay which could ſcarcely afford ſupport to themſelves; deſcribed the continual ſolicitation to men in power; and the neglect and indignities which, he ſaid, poverty was apt to receive. He then talked of the anxious ſtate of a ſuitor's mind, elevated with hopes, only to be ſunk the next moment in deſpair. The poor man could hold out no longer; tears ran down his face, and he begged of my Lord to ſay no more, for he had touched the ſtring of his misfortunes; crying out, with a kind of agony, "I have "too long ſuffered all, and more than "you have deſcribed, and gone thro' the

"ſcenes

" ſcenes your imagination has only drawn.
" Be grateful, Sir, to Providence, for ne-
" ver having afflicted you with ſuch miſ-
" fortunes; for I perceive it has not, or
" you could not have dwelt on circum-
" ſtances of which the bare recollection,
" tho' the time of ſuffering was paſt, muſt
" cut you to the ſoul." Wound up to this pitch, it was eaſy to draw him into a relation of misfortunes which had too entire a poſſeſſion of his thoughts to be any longer concealed; but it was ſome time before we could get him into a regular narration. The diſturbance of his mind made him repeat a confuſed ſet of facts, mixed with ſuch pathetic exclamations, as drew tears from my eyes. However, at laſt my Lord compoſed his ſpirits ſo far, that he began thus:

" My name, Sir, is Traverſe. I was
" put into the army as ſoon as I was able
" to carry a pair of colours, which my fa-
" ther, who was a Colonel, gave me;
" but dying ſoon after, and leaving me
" with nothing for my ſupport but the
" profits of my poſt and the gratitude of
" his friends, among whom he had ſpent
" his fortune, it was not long before I ex-
" perienced the diſagreeable parts of my
" profeſſion.

" profeſſion. My father's friends careſſed
" me, indeed, and courted me into their
" company, which was attended with ex-
" pences very inconvenient to me. I
" durſt not, however, wholly neglect them,
" as I hoped a return from their friend-
" ſhip, the frail dependance of people of
" my profeſſion, where intereſt is the ſo-
" vereign diſpoſer of every thing. But
" the firſt opportunity I had of trying
" theſe friends ſhewed me, that if hope
" was a pleaſure, it was one I was likely
" long to enjoy. Every vacancy in our
" regiment raiſed it, and I got no prefer-
" ment to gratify it. Somebody or other
" was conſtantly put over my head, tho'
" they ſometimes could ſcarcely perform
" the eaſy exerciſes practiſed among us.
" My patrons aſſured me they did all they
" could; but ſome great power fruſtrated
" their endeavours. However, they fed
" me with promiſes of procuring me the
" next Lieutenancy. For ſome years, I
" believe, their intentions correſponded
" with their words; but, at laſt, I found
" the higheſt favour I ſhould ever receive
" from them was being drawn into their
" follies and expences, little ſuitable to
" my inclinations or income; being treated
with

" with the little ceremony of a depen-
" dant, and obliged to pleaſe their con-
" venience and pride, which led them to
" like having gentlemen in their train of
" followers. Many would ſhew me as a
" young man whom they had taken un-
" der their protection, and whoſe fortune
" they intended to puſh, having a great
" regard for my father; and never failed
" inſinuating that they conferred continual
" obligations upon me. This greatly
" mortified my pride, as I was conſcious
" of receiving none from them, unleſs
" they eſteemed diſagreeable converſation
" as ſuch. Finding I was not likely to
" be raiſed by their intereſt; and that,
" notwithſtanding I had been in ſeveral
" engagements, and received particular
" encomiums from my officers, yet ſtill I
" was paſſed by in every preferment, as
" much as if it had been impoſſible for
" me to change my poſt, I at laſt be-
" gan to neglect them, and, in deſpair,
" reſolved to think no more of it, but to
" try whether time would be a better
" friend. Fortunately for me we had a
" new Colonel ſoon after this, who, un-
" derſtanding how long I had been in the
" regiment, and having enquired into

" my

" my character, and the reaſon of my
" remaining ſo long an Enſign, told me
" I ſhould ſee that merit had greater in-
" tereſt with him than the recommen-
" dations of people in power; and ac-
" cordingly gave me the firſt vacant lieu-
" tenancy. But he dying in a ſhort time,
" I had no opportunity of experiencing
" his further goodneſs, which, I am per-
" ſuaded, would have led him to promote
" me in due order. However, I was to
" owe the obligation to a fairer hand.
" Sometime after my Colonel's death, I
" renewed my acquaintance with a young
" lady, which had been for many years
" interrupted. During our childhood we
" had been almoſt continually together;
" but were ſeparated by an employment
" which called her father into a foreign
" country, from whence he was but juſt
" returned. I had not long viſited at his
" houſe before I found a new kind of
" uneaſineſs, which made me inſenſible
" to every thing that did not concern my
" great wiſh, the longing I had to make
" my former playfellow the companion
" of my ſoul. The recollections of our
" childiſh ſports, and all the paſſages
" of our infant years, created an intimacy
" between

" between us almoſt as ſoon as we met.
" Tho' ſhe was handſome, beauty was
" her leaſt charm: her underſtanding was
" excellent, though years and experience
" could not be ſaid to have improved it.
" Her heart was as free from blemiſh as
" it was filled with virtues. Then the
" numberleſs attractions in every look
" and motion were ſo far beyond de-
" ſcription, that I will be ſilent, though
" I could dwell on them for ever. I flat-
" tered myſelf with a belief of a friendly
" return of affection from this angel; but
" this was not ſufficient; I ardently longed
" that ſhe ſhould conceive more tender
" ſentiments, though the low ſtate of my
" fortune would not permit me to endea-
" vour to inſpire them, as I conſidered
" it was the means of making her the
" companion of my deſpair, of which
" alone I wiſhed to act the miſer, and to
" communicate no part to her. Acci-
" dent, however, betrayed the love I
" feared to reveal, and her behaviour
" upon the occaſion ſerved to bind my
" fetters faſter. Her generoſity charmed
" me to exceſs; and we ſoon enjoyed the
" enchanting pleaſure ariſing from pro-
" feſſions of mutual love, with all the

" warmth

" warmth and delicacy that could be felt
" or expreſſed by people filled with a
" paſſionate tenderneſs for each other,
" and bleſſed with frequent interviews.
" We were ſo happy we even forgot there
" was a poſſibility of being happier. But
" the evil ſtar that preſided at my birth
" would not leave me long in this ſitua-
" tion. The father of my Caroline, for
" that was my angel's name, died; and
" having ſeen the mutual affection be-
" tween me and his daughter, and the
" diſadvantages which would ariſe to her
" from an union between us, left her a
" good fortune, but on condition ſhe
" ſhould not marry me. Notwithſtand-
" ing this cruel uſage, ſhe (miracle of
" goodneſs) grieved for a father who did
" not deſerve it from her, and I was ſuf-
" ficiently employed in endeavouring to
" comfort her, tho' I was little able to
" bear a circumſtance which, I thought,
" muſt deprive me of all my hopes; for
" I could not think of bringing her into a
" ſtate where her ſupport muſt end with
" my life, which had more than the com-
" mon chances of mortality againſt it.
" But her generoſity diſregarded theſe

" dangers.

" dangers. She had a ſum of money " (the legacy of an old aunt) ſufficient " to buy an exchange of a company for " me. She preſſed me to lay it out in " this manner; but I was determined " againſt making that uſe of it. It would, " indeed, have made our income more " tolerable, but in caſe of my death ſhe " muſt have been left entirely deſtitute. " After finding that her generoſity re- " ſiſted all I could ſay to deter her from " ſharing the fortune of ſuch a wretch as " myſelf, (perhaps arguments ſo contrary " to the tender ſentiments of my heart " were not enforced in a perſuaſive man- " ner) I told her, that if ſhe would ven- " ture to marry me, and to ſhare my " poor commiſſion, I ſhould be the hap- " pieſt man on earth, and would place " her money in ſuch a manner, that after " my death it might be ſome little de- " pendance for her; but that I abſolutely " would neither lay it out, nor receive " any thing from it while I lived. She " ſeemed to conſent, and we agreed to " relinquiſh the fortune her father had " charged with ſuch heavy conditions, " and deſpiſe any treaſure when put in

" com-

" competition with the poſſeſſion of each
" other. Various accidents, however,
" deferred for ſome time the execution of
" our purpoſe. Moſt of theſe delays, in-
" deed, proceeded from her; but my
" confidence in her truth and love was
" ſuch, that I could object to nothing ſhe
" propoſed, nor harbour any ſuſpicion of
" a coldneſs in her heart. The liberty
" of ſpending almoſt all my time with
" her conſtituted a ſtate of bliſs, when
" ſhe gave it ſome interruption one day
" by delivering to me a Captain's com-
" miſſion; in the procuring of which
" ſhe had laid out all her little fortune.
" While a friend (but an injudicious one)
" had been tranſacting this affair, ſhe had,
" on ſpecious pretences, deferred our mar-
" riage, to avoid my having the power
" of preventing her from concluding it.
" It was ſurprizing how well ſhe had con-
" cealed the knowledge of it from me.
" I have ſeldom been more ſenſibly hurt
" than at this diſcovery of what ſhe had
" done. She accompanied it with ſaying,
" that ſhe could not believe one who was
" ſo entirely mine, whoſe life and every

" thought

" thought and action depended ſo much
" on me, could ever remain in the world
" after I had left it; and therefore ſhe
" had taken care that I ſhould enjoy the
" little fortune had given her; but if ſhe
" had had it in her power to make me
" the ſmalleſt reparation for the injuſtice
" of mercenary people, ſhe ſhould think
" herſelf happy. Tho' I was overcome
" with her generoſity, yet my concern
" got the better of my gratitude, and the
" firſt thing I ſaid was, that ſhe had en-
" tailed cowardice and conſtant miſery
" upon me; for I ſhould be ever wretched
" with the fear of what would become of
" her if I were to die. Theſe ſort of con-
" verſations, when the heart is ſo much
" engaged in them as mine was, are never
" obliterated from the memory; but I
" find I ought often to check myſelf, for
" I am very tedious in my narration. My
" imagination was always too warm to
" ſuffer me to confine myſelf to a few
" principal facts, when the ſlighteſt cir-
" cumſtances were of ſuch infinite plea-
" ſure and importance to me. However
" I will ſuppreſs what paſſed between us
" on the ſubject I have mentioned, tho' a

" thouſand

" thouſand things my Caroline ſaid crowd
" to my remembrance, and fill me with
" rapture. But I will not allow utter-
" ance to one, and only tell you, in few
" words, that immediately after we were
" married."

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVIII.

" THE joy (continued the poor
" Captain) which I received from
" the poſſeſſion of my dear Caroline would
" have recompenced me for much greater
" evils than thoſe I had experienced
" in life. Every day diſcovered ſome
" new virtue in her heart; time even
" improved her charms; and, however
" uncommon, what before marriage was
" only violent love and tender eſteem,
" grew in me almoſt to love and adora-
" tion. She was ſo good an œconomiſt,
" that we lived very neatly on our ſmall
" income; and ſhe appeared ſo entirely
" contented, that my ambition was loſt
" in exceſs of happineſs. I ſcarcely
" thought of farther preferment, nor felt
" the unjuſt preferences given to much
" younger officers than myſelf. I ſaw
" boys, qualified neither by age nor ex-
" perience for the loweſt poſts in the
" army, put over my head, and could
" not find diſturbance enough in my
" mind to produce one murmur. I con-
" ſidered

" ſidered Providence had laviſhed its bleſſ-
" ings on me, when it gave me my Caro-
" line; and ſo conſiderable was my por-
" tion of happineſs, that I had no ti-
" tle to aſk for any thing more, but
" ought to leave to others the poor
" enjoyments of preferment. Nothing
" could tempt me out of her company,
" but an endeavour to get ſome little
" place for her, which might afford her
" a ſupport in caſe the thread of my
" earthly felicity ſhould be cut. For
" this I importuned my friends; for
" though I had but little confidence in
" them, yet this application ſeemed my
" only chance. My Succeſs anſwered
" my faith; I got nothing done, after
" repeated trials, to remove this bur-
" den from my mind, which imbittered
" my joy by ſo many painful reflections
" it almoſt made me a coward. Death ap-
" peared to me ſo encompaſſed with ter-
" rors, that I have often wondered how I
" could hazard the meeting of it with tole-
" rable compoſure in the field, when in
" the quiet of my own houſe the leaſt
" diſorder filled me with inexpreſſible
" agonies, from the apprehenſions I had

" of its increaſe. Though I have men-
" tioned my happineſs as perfect, yet
" it was often interrupted by being oblig-
" ed to attend the army abroad, and
" leave my wife to mourn my abſence;
" but then joyful returns ſucceeded, and
" recompenced us for paſt pains. I of-
" ten doubted whether I could be juſ-
" tified in hazarding the ſupport of an
" ineſtimable wife and ſeveral fine chil-
" dren, in all the chances of war. It
" ſeemed reaſonable, that in conſidera-
" tion of them I ought to have ſold
" out; but then again it was ungrateful
" to my king, to have received his pay
" ſo long, and leave his ſervice at the
" only time I could be uſeful. It was
" true, I had ſuffered a great deal of ill
" treatment; but that was becauſe my
" obſcurity hid me from his Majeſty's
" knowledge, and gave perſons, of birth
" ſtill more obſcure, though higher in
" office, power to behave towards me
" as ſuch people will ever do to the un-
" friended. But I had ſtill another rea-
" ſon to keep and perform the duties of
" my commiſſion. Such an action would
" have branded me with the name of
" coward,

" coward, and that I had not courage
" to bear. I could have given up my
" life for my family; but my reputa-
" tion was of more importance to me,
" and without it I ſhould have been a
" diſgrace, inſtead of a comfort to them.
" I ſhould have been unworthy of my
" Caroline; nor would ſhe, I am con-
" vinced, as much as ſhe was a prey
" to tender fears, have conſented that I
" ſhould have brought ſo great a miſ-
" fortune on myſelf, in order to remove
" the chance of one from her. It is
" eaſy to imagine the peace gave us
" great joy; we little foreſaw the conſe-
" quences. We had now nine children,
" the eldeſt not ſeventeen, the youngeſt
" under a year old. My health was much
" impaired by the campaigns abroad;
" but I doubted not that I ſhould reco-
" ver it by the quiet and happy enjoy-
" ment of the company of my wife and
" children. Nor was I miſtaken; by
" their kind care and attendance I was
" grown much better, when I heard the
" fatal news of the reduction of our
" regiment. I was greatly ſhocked at
" this unexpected blow; by this means,

" our income was dwindled to ſo lit-
" tle, that it was inſufficient for the
" ſupport of ſo large a number. None
" of our children were large enough to
" contribute much to the general ſtock,
" by their moſt induſtrious endeavours.
" I was too feeble in body, and too weak
" in mind, to give any aſſiſtance. The
" moſt extreme poverty, had it afflicted
" none but myſelf, would have rather
" ſerved as a ſpur than a depreſſion to
" my ſpirits; but when I reflected on
" the difficulties into which I had brought
" my wife, it overwhelmed me with
" grief; nor could it be cured by the
" patience and chearfulneſs with which
" ſhe bore this misfortune. Her beha-
" viour, by ſhewing her merit ſtill more
" conſpicuouſly, only heightened my re-
" gret that ſuch virtue ſhould ſuffer.
" As fit to ſtruggle with bad fortune,
" as to grace good; ſhe ſoon, by various
" kinds of work, found means of in-
" creaſing our income, though the ne-
" ceſſary care of ſo large a family would
" not ſuffer her to gain enough to en-
" able us to continue our ſons at ſchool,
" which was a great mortification, as

" we

" we had always been deſirous of giv-
" ing them good education, even though
" we ſhould ſtreighten ourſelves for that
" purpoſe, when our income was the
" moſt plentiful. All the ſervice my
" health could permit me to be of, was
" to turn ſchoolmaſter to my children,
" that they might ſuffer as little as poſſi-
" ble from our poverty. Thus, by my
" Caroline's ingenuity and induſtry, we
" were ſupported; nor was I ever, for
" a moment, able to perceive that ſhe
" either repined or grieved at being
" obliged to give this aſſiſtance; on the
" contrary, ſhe appeared to take greater
" pleaſure in it than in any amuſe-
" ments ſhe had ever enjoyed. But,
" as if Providence had ſome wiſe and
" good purpoſe in afflicting us, which
" by this means was fruſtrated, ſhe
" one day, after returning home wet
" quite through her cloaths, from a place
" where her buſineſs had called her,
" was ſeized, as we ſat at dinner, with
" a ſtroke of the palſy, which at firſt
" affected her head, and deprived her
" of all her limbs. However, ſhe re-
" covered her ſenſes, I may ſay, ſooner

" than I did mine; for the condition
" ſhe was in, and the occaſion of it, left
" me very little uſe of my reaſon. The
" phyſician who attended her, and who
" was my good friend, taking the great-
" eſt care of her, without accepting any
" reward but the pleaſure of doing a
" charitable action, declared that he had
" no hopes of her recovery but from
" the Bath-waters, and offered to ſend
" with us a recommendation to one of
" his own profeſſion, who could well
" ſupply his place in care of her. You
" may imagine I did not heſitate a
" moment in my reſolution of ſending
" her thither, notwithſtanding the bad
" ſtate of our circumſtances. I ſold,
" directly, all the furniture of our houſe,
" and every thing we had, which could
" raiſe money; taking for my children
" a little hole which would juſt contain
" them; and leaving them under the
" care of my eldeſt ſon and daughter
" (who were more prudent than their
" ages promiſed) I, with my ſecond
" daughter, attended my wife to Bath,
" where I had the joy, in about two
" months, to ſee her recover her health

" and

" and limbs, excepting her hands, which
" ſtill remained ſo lame that ſhe could
" not even dreſs herſelf. I never ſaw
" her ſo much affected with any thing;
" ſhe would have eſteemed herſelf hap-
" py could ſhe have bought the uſe
" of her hand with the loſs of her foot;
" for ſhe looked on herſelf as a helpleſs
" burden to a diſtreſſed family. But,
" for once, I differed much from her,
" and rejoiced at the ſeat in which the
" diſtemper had fixed, if it would not
" quite leave her, as, by giving her the
" power of uſing exerciſe, I hoped her
" health might be preſerved, which in
" the other caſe could not be expected.
" After a pretty long trial, ſhe was
" told there was little poſſibility of her
" recovering her hand; and the weather
" growing fine, it was imagined air might
" be of more ſervice to her. This, and
" the low price of things in the coun-
" try, made us determine to return no
" more to London; ſo enquiring for the
" cheapeſt country in that part of the
" world, we removed to the borders of
" Wales, where we hired a ſmall houſe,
" and ſent for our children by the leaſt

" expenſive conveyance. When we had " been there ſome time, I was induced " to return to town in order to get ſome " redreſs, having been informed of a " good opportunity of attempting it; but " found the hopes that had been given " me were very fallacious, and ſhould " have ſoon returned, had I not been " ſeized with a malignant fever, wherein " I verily believe I muſt have periſhed " for want, had not my phyſician aſſiſted " me ſtill more in the capacity of a " friend than his profeſſion. I am now " detained here by ſome buſineſs I am " tranſacting for him, happy to have the " power of giving ſome little token of " my gratitude. As my recovery is " yet but very imperfect, I come every " morning to take a walk in the fields, " for the benefit of the air, which I find " is a place much frequented likewiſe " by this lady and yourſelf, whom I " have often obſerved." Here the poor man ended his ſtory, which had detained us a long time, even to the encroaching on an engagement of my Lord's; but he would not interrupt a narration ſo hardly obtained. I could not forbear aſking

aſking after his wife, whether the country had not done her ſervice. He told me, ſhe was juſt the ſame as when ſhe went into it, but, he thanked God, in very good health; and that he had contrived to prevent her knowing of his laſt illneſs. We parted from the poor man with heavy hearts; it lowered my ſpirits for the whole day, and filled my Lord's thoughts for a longer time.

CHAP. XXIX.

LORD Dorcheſter made very diligent enquiry after our Captain, to know the reality of what he ſaid; for people who would not miſapply their bounty muſt be on their guard againſt what they hear, leſt truth ſhould be diſguiſed by faſhood, or clouded by partiality. His ſearch proved to the honour of the gentleman's veracity: for he learnt every circumſtance from other hands. He was then not leſs earneſt in procuring him preferment; and, as there were many vacancies, he got the choice of two commiſſions. The next time we met our Captain, my Lord deſired he would come to his houſe that morning, and begged I would go along with him, that I might have the ſatisfaction of ſeeing how the poor man took the news of his preferment. I ſhould unwillingly have been abſent from this interview, therefore readily complied with his Lordſhip's requeſt.

At the appointed hour the Captain came, and was brought up ſtairs to us; the

the ſurprize he had been at firſt thrown into, by ſo unexpected an invitation to the houſe of one of my Lord's rank, and in a manner which ſeemed to promiſe him ſome benefit, ſtill was viſible when he entered. My Lord aſked him, if he wiſhed ſo much to be again in the King's ſervice as to like going into the Weſt Indies. The poor man anſwered, "that he really did not; for his health "was ſo bad he feared he ſhould not "be able to bear the change of climate, "and his life was now of more im-"portance than ever to his family, "ſince his wife was intirely incapable "of gaining the ſubſiſtence he could "not leave her; which made him ra-"ther prefer his half-pay, than hazard "a life, the loſs of which muſt bring "ſo much diſtreſs on thoſe he loved "to exceſs. Beſides, the troops were "to ſet ſail ſo ſoon, that he ſhould not "have time to bid his family, perhaps, "a laſt adieu." My Lord told him "he was ſorry to hear this was his "way of thinking, having got a Ma-"jority for him in one of thoſe regi-"ments." Notwithſtanding the reluctance the poor man had expreſſed to going

going abroad, yet he received this news with as much gratitude as if it had been the very thing he wiſhed. "He acknow-
"ledged his obligations to my Lord were
"infinite; made many exclamations on
"the uncommonneſs of his fortune,
"which had denied him all aſſiſtance
"from people who profeſſed themſelves
"his friends, had borne the appearance
"of it for a great number of years, and
"had even given him a right to ex-
"pect they ſhould be really ſuch, by
"receiving obligations from his fa-
"mily; and now he had the higheſt be-
"nefits conferred by one intirely a ſtran-
"ger to him.

To this my Lord replied, that "he
"wiſhed what he had done had ſuited
"his inclination and circumſtances as
"much as he hoped it would." The Captain then endeavoured to hide the regret which filled his heart, for fear of not appearing ſufficiently grateful. He told my Lord "the obligation was
"equal; he had ſupplied all his appa-
"rent wants; of the particular tem-
"per of his mind his Lordſhip could
"not be a judge; he had done all
"that compaſſion and generoſity could
"ſuggeſt

" ſuggeſt to make him happy; and " Sir," ſaid he, " I hope my tears were " the effect of a poor deſpondency; your " goodneſs has raiſed better thoughts " in me; the change of climate may " repair my conſtitution, and I may, in " a few years, return in health to my " dear wife and children." However, ſo far was his heart from the chearfulneſs he endeavoured to expreſs, that tears ran down his cheeks in ſpite of all his efforts to reſtrain them; and finding himſelf unable to controul emotions which he thought were a kind of ingratitude to his benefactor, he juſt ſummoned up ſtrength enough to return him thanks once more, and then went out of the room.

No ſooner was the door ſhut than the violence of his grief found its way, and, with his unavailing endeavours to conceal it, I really feared would have deſtroyed him on the ſpot. We had followed him immediately, which heightened his diſtreſs, as he wiſhed to remain unſeen. When he got into the hall, my Lord deſired him to accompany us into a parlour, of which we opened the door, and thereby preſented

to

to his view his wife and children; my Lord having ſent for them all up to town, in order to give them this joyful ſurprize, and to have the pleaſure of being witneſs to it, and to procure a meeting in caſe he had choſen to go to the Weſt-Indies. Even the beloved Caroline knew not half my Lord's purpoſe. I was ſoon apprehenſive we had done harm by the ſuddenneſs of this interview; for the Captain fainted away inſtantly, and was ſo long a time before he was brought to himſelf, that I feared the joy had been too ſtrong for his weak thread of life. His wife ſeemed greatly terrified, and her behaviour indicated the affection which every action of her life had ſhewn. The recovery of his ſenſes reſtored the general joy; which increaſed to a great degree of extacy, when my Lord informed him that he had the choice of a majority in a regiment going to the Weſt-Indies, or to be a Captain of horſe here (having received the promiſe of the latter after he ſent for his family) which he now imagined he would prefer; adding, "to "leſſen the uneaſineſs you ſeem under "for your family, here are bills to the "value

" value of 1500l. and I will furniſh for " you the houſe you ſhall take, let it " be where it will." Their joy roſe to a height that muſt have been painful; they looked on my Lord with adoration; and gave way to raptures that would have forced a heart the moſt inſenſible to the ſenſations of others, to partake of theirs. How much my Lord did ſo, was viſible in his countenance; for I never ſaw any thing like the bliſs expreſſed in it; he ſeemed to feel a more ſolid delight than they did; and I can eaſily imagine he did ſo. I think their ſatisfaction could ſcarcely exceed mine; but his muſt be higher, as he had the inexpreſſible pleaſure of having been the cauſe of their happineſs, added to that of ſeeing it. Their expreſſions of gratitude were the moſt lively that could be, and they ſeemed not to know whether moſt to felicitate and careſs each other, or to thank their benefactor. They did both in a breath, and were in an agitation of joy ſcarcely to be imagined, till on enumerating the comforts he had thus beſtowed on them, they all melted into tears with exceſs of delight; nor could either my Lord or myſelf refrain from joining

joining with them. This, in ſome meaſure compoſed them, and they began to take leave of us with the moſt ardent acknowledgements. The Captain aſked my Lord pardon for the reluctance with which he received the firſt news of his bounty; adding, "that he hoped "his Lordſhip would excuſe what was "cauſed by the love of his wife, if "he conſidered how very irkſome any "gift would be to himſelf that ſhould "oblige him to leave his lady. For "he could ſee from his behaviour, as "well as know it from the charms na-"ture had beſtowed on her, that he "was a very ſtrong inſtance of conjugal "affection." He concluded, with wiſhing us to live to a happy old age together; and they bid us adieu, having raiſed bluſhes in both my Lord and myſelf by their miſtake, and mine were increaſed by my Lord's watching my countenance. I never before ſaw him do ſo ill natured a thing, as to make any one ſuffer a moment's uneaſineſs even from baſhfulneſs.

I wondered why theſe people ſhould imagine us married. As a man may have many friends, but can have only one wife,

wife, the probability was, in my opinion, againſt them; and I could no otherwiſe account for an error that had ſo diſconcerted us both, than from a belief that it proceeded from the appearance of more affection in my Lord's behaviour than was uſual between perſons united by no dearer tie than friendſhip. This conſtruction was too agreeable for me to perplex myſelf by ſeeking any other.

The happineſs I had of late enjoyed, was doomed to be of ſhort continuance. The evening of the day in which my Lord had given ſuch felicity by his generoſity to the diſtreſſed Captain and his family, I went to an aſſembly; at my coming from thence, my footman was not to be found, and, to avoid the trouble of returning into a crowded room, I got into my chair, and went away without him. As my chairmen were carrying me under a dead wall that was in my road, they were ſtopped by ſome men, who pulled me out of my chair, and forced me into another, which they had brought for that purpoſe.

The

The place being little frequented, my ſcreams were not heard, and what little courage nature had beſtowed on my chairmen, was quite overcome by the ſuperior number of the enemy, and I was carried off without reſiſtance.

Every ſtep increaſed my terror; but yet, conſcious that the ſhrilneſs of a female voice muſt be almoſt as uſeful in populous ſtreets as a weapon of defence, I endeavoured to let down the windows of the chair, that I might the eaſier make myſelf heard. But this attempt I perceived in vain: I then broke a pane of glaſs, but inſtead of receiving any benefit thereby, I found that they were caſed up with wood on the outſide, I ſuppoſe to prevent the very thing I intended. This diſcovery, however, explained to me the ſudden darkneſs which had immediately followed the putting me into the chair, and increaſed the terrors which the other circumſtances alone would have rendered ſufficient.

However, unwilling to give up the hope, of which I was thus in reaſon deprived, I exerted my voice to its loudeſt key, flattering myſelf with a poſſibility

poſſibility that it might be diſtinguiſhed by ſome chance perſons paſſing cloſe to the chair, whoſe compaſſion might lead them to enquire the cauſe. But this effort only ſerved to ſpend my ſpirits the more entirely. The men who attended me, I imagined, kept every one elſe from coming within hearing, and we proceeded without moleſtation till we arrived at the houſe where we were deſigned to ſtop. The chair carried me into the hall. I was led into a dark room, and there left to my own thoughts, with ſubject for "meditation even to "madneſs."

It would be in vain, ſhould I attempt to deſcribe my terrors. I had heard of robberies and murders; I was not conſcious of having given ſuch offence to any one, as ſhould incline them to perpetrate ſo horrid an action; but then ſo much ceremony ſeemed unneceſſary for a robbery, which might have been performed with more eaſe and expedition. Thus I remained terrified and perplexed, fearing every thing, yet fixing upon nothing, till I was almoſt diſtracted with my apprehenſions, from which I was at laſt

laſt relieved by ſeeing the door open. The terrors of expectation were ſo increaſed by the approach of the danger which I feared, that, no longer able to ſupport the agonies it raiſed, life forſook me, and I fainted away before I could diſtinguiſh for whom the door was opened.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXX.

MY horrors did not end with the fainting fit they had occaſioned; I came to myſelf in apprehenſions no leſs dreadful than if certain death had awaited me. Fear paints in very ſtrong colours; my imagination repreſented to me armed men, of moſt tremendous mien and mercileſs behaviour; it cloathed them like the murderers in Macbeth, with the additional terrors they would wear when one's ſelf was to become the victim of their cruelty.

I could not immediately venture to look up; and when I did, it was not directly that the appearance of a fine woman, richly and gaily dreſſed, could diſpel thoſe dreadful ideas from my brain. However, her endeavours to calm the fears ſhe had raiſed, at laſt ſucceeded; and when ſhe perceived me in ſome degree come to my ſenſes, ſhe ſat down by me, with a countenance, which, under a ſmile, tried to conceal dejection, anger, and diſdain; but ſo ineffectually, that at any other time every glance would have

have diſcompoſed and alarmed me; but I now beheld her with pleaſure; for however terrible a woman's rage may be to a mind at eaſe, yet her face was more ſweet than mercy and benevolence, when compared to the grim murderers my fancy had formed.

She left me ſome leiſure to recover myſelf before ſhe broke ſilence, during which time I recollected her to be the Marchioneſs of Trente, whom I had often met in my viſits, though ſhe had never condeſcended to ſpeak to me, and had always caſt ſuch diſdainful glances upon me, as made me not more forward to court her acquaintance than ſhe ſeemed deſirous of cultivating mine; on the contrary, I uſed to keep at as great a diſtance as I could poſſibly, flying her as if my mind had ſome knowledge of the uneaſineſs I was to ſuffer from her.

At length ſhe began thus, " though " it may mortify my pride to confeſs my " love to a ſucceſsful rival, yet my de- " ſign requires I ſhould inform you that " I have long entertained a particular " affection for Lord Dorcheſter, and " had once reaſon to believe it was " not without return; though now his

" views

" views are more humble, and he con-
" fines his deſires to objects eaſier ob-
" tained. I cannot longer endure to ſee
" him thus debaſe himſelf; neglecting a
" ſtate of happineſs that might be as
" laſting as his life; but as I don't chuſe
" to confer ſo great an obligation as I
" ſhould by declaring my care for him,
" I have taken this method of conſulting
" at once his welfare and my own."

She then offered me an income ſuperior to that he gave me, on condition " I " would promiſe never, from that hour, " to ſee, to write, or ſend any verbal meſ-" ſage to him."

With great warmth, I told her, " I " would not enter into ſuch an engage-" ment, could ſhe reward me with the " poſſeſſion of all Europe; no, not to " ſave my life; becauſe I believed I " ſhould not be able to perform it; and " I would never make a promiſe ſo con-" trary to my happineſs, as it would be " bringing myſelf into an almoſt irreſiſti-" ble temptation to break it."

" Wonderfully ſcrupulous truely," replied her Ladyſhip: " but how ignorant " ſoever moſt people may be, you find " my vigilant endeavours to diſcover

" you

" you have not proved fruitleſs: and " I muſt tell you, it would be more " wiſe to accept the propoſal I have ſo " generouſly made you, and to ſpend " your time in making peace with Hea- " ven, and rendering yourſelf fit for death, " with which our mortality threatens us " every hour, than perſiſt to glory in " wickedneſs with ſuch unparallelled im- " pudence."

I was ſo ignorant of the Marchioneſs's meaning, that my anſwer could not be very much to the purpoſe; but it was ſpoke with that ſpirit which ſuch groundleſs, and, to me, unaccountable abuſe could not fail in raiſing in a diſpoſition like mine. Its effect was natural; her temper was combuſtible, and, conſequently, being kindled by the fire in mine, burſt into flame. She roſe from her chair in a violent rage, telling me, " ſhe would " no longer give the power of choice to " ſo inſolent a creature, but by force " perform what I would not conſent to; " for ſhe would convey me to ſuch a " diſtance, that I ſhould no longer ſee " and bewitch Lord Dorcheſter."

I was very ſenſible of the terrors of this menace: but could not ſtoop to one

one whoſe unworthy treatment of me gave little hope of redreſs from her compaſſion: what mercy can we expect from thoſe who are void even of juſtice. I told her, with an air of indignation that ſtill rendered me more qualified to converſe with her than I thought I could have been, that "I would never conſent "to my own unhappineſs, whatever her "power might inflict." Adding, that "it would not redound greatly to the "honour of Lady Trente, to have made "a woman unhappy who deſerved no "evil from her."

The Marchioneſs did not deign to give me any anſwer beſide a diſdainful ſmile; then turning to a woman who was juſt come into the room, but had kept a ſtrict ſilence, "Herner," ſaid ſhe, "take this "wretch under your care. See ſhe is "well guarded, and that ſhe has no "means of correſponding with any one, "either before or after ſhe leaves this "town. Watch her well on the road, "but never converſe with her; for I "could not forgive any relation of mine "who ſhould ſo far debaſe herſelf."

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The obſequious Herner curtſied, and promiſed exact obedience; and then they both departed, leaving me to my own reflections, which were not much interrupted for three days; for ſo long was I locked up in that room, where was no bed by whoſe refreſhment I might alleviate either my mental or bodily uneaſineſs.

A little fire was afforded me, and a bare ſufficiency of meagre food, little ſuperior to bread and water. I have ſince had charity enough to believe her Ladyſhip thought faſting and mortification moſt ſalutiferous for my ſoul; of whoſe ſtate, it ſeems, ſhe had entertained no very favourable opinion. My door was never unlocked, but to let in the neceſſary ſupports of my exiſtence, and all theſe offices were performed with ſuch ſilent gravity, as gave a greater air of melancholy and ſolemnity to a ſituation, which, your Ladyſhip will allow, was in none of its circumſtances very lively and agreeable.

My chief attendant was a little girl of ten or eleven years old; who whenever ſhe came in, ſtartled at me as if I had

I had been a monſter. If I ſpoke to her, ſhe would run away, and if I offered to ſnatch hold of her, would ſcream as if I was going to murder her. If ſhe was obliged to paſs me, ſhe would take as large a circumference to avoid me, as if ſhe imagined I had drawn an enchanted circle round my chair. I need not ſay that my mind was in a very uneaſy ſtate. I had a love for freedom which ill agreed with impriſonment; and I hourly repined at having exchanged the pleaſures of Lord Dorcheſter's converſation for the moſt odious ſolitude, with no object to entertain my eyes, or raiſe new ideas in me; denied the ſound of a human voice, or any thing that might in any degree divert my thoughts from the pains of my preſent ſituation, or from the fears of what farther puniſhment might ſtill be in ſtore for me; without even the means of expoſing a body fatigued with want of reſt, and worn out with grief and terror. A mind leſs painfully affected than mine, would have found ſome difficulty in ſleeping in an uneaſy chair; to me, it was ſo near impoſſible, that I had but a few moments

reſpite from my anxious reflections the whole time I was there. Nothing more diſtreſſed me than the notion of my Lord's uneaſineſs at my ſudden diſappearing; and I know not how I could have been ſupported under all the perplexity and perturbation of my mind, had I not formed great hopes of making my eſcape, when time ſhould have abated the rigour of their vigilance. I thought I had ſo much greater reaſon to be diligent in diſcovering the means of getting from thence, than they could have for keeping me there, that I muſt, at length, be able to effect it. I flattered myſelf, that my Lord's ſearch after me would give me another chance. I imagined he muſt hear of the violence with which I had been carried away, and could not doubt but his affection would contrive to reſcue me.

By theſe hopes I was kept from ſinking into abſolute deſpair; and the neceſſity of exerting ſome command over myſelf, gave me ſpirit to go through three days of this painful confinement with more fortitude than I could have expected. The third evening of this my

enforced

enforced reſidence, Mrs. Herner made her appearance, and told me "we were "to go into the country the next morn- "ing." I aſked "if the Marchioneſs "was to be of the party?" To my inexpreſſible ſatisfaction, ſhe anſwered in the negative; but added, "that I was "to be guarded as carefully as if I was "under her Ladyſhip's eyes. Though, "perhaps, ſhe might a little exceed "her orders in her care for my conveni- "ence; for ſhe could not but confeſs "my perſon, and the dignity which ac- "companied my grief, without any mix- "ture of rage or impatience, had pre- "judiced her ſo much in my favour, "that ſhe was ſorry ſhe was forbid con- "verſing with me."

I could not help thanking her for her humanity; the leaſt inſtance of tender- neſs was now particularly dear to me. The compariſon my mind drew between her and her Right Honourable couſin, re- preſented her in moſt advantageous co- lours. I immediately conceived hopes of finding favourable opportunities for my eſcape, either in my journey, or in my reſidence with one whoſe compaſſion might

might make her leſs deſirous of detaining me, conſequently leſs vigilant than the Marchioneſs.

Before ſhe left me, I begged that if I was ſtill to live with mutes ſhe would give me a book; with which ſhe readily complied. Her complaiſance gave me no reaſon to admire her taſte. I ſhould have been very ſorry to have had my ſtudies long under her direction; however, ſimple as the book was, I preferred it to the chaos of my own mind; and was leſs offended at the folly of the author than I ſhould have been at my own in ſo long a ſeries of thoughts, as I was not inclined to bluſh for his fooliſhneſs. Before the Marchioneſs went to bed, ſhe came into my dungeon, to renew the offers ſhe had at firſt made, in hopes, I ſuppoſe, that my captivity had humbled me; but when ſhe found my reſolution remained unſhaken, ſhe informed me, that "I was going to a family man-
"ſion which was ſo very diſmal and for-
"lorn, that it would make me repent
"my obſtinacy; and I might depend on
"ſpending my whole life there, unleſs I
"would agree to the terms propoſed."

My

My anſwer was, that " nothing could " appear ſo dreadful to me as loſing the " converſation of Lord Dorcheſter, and " leaving him in ſuch uncertainty con- " cerning the occaſion of it."

The Marchioneſs replied, that " my " rejecting her offer would not prevent " the thing I ſeemed moſt to fear, ſince " ſhe would take care he ſhould never more " hear of me." Without any further diſcourſe, ſhe left the room.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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